



BEACONSFIELD HIGH SCHOOL
A remarkable grammar school

CURRICULUM POLICY

Date last reviewed: Summer Term 2025
Next review date: Summer Term 2026
For review by: HT

Changes

Curriculum intent updated to match VMP

GLR updated to match VMP

All curriculum updates checked by ASR

All Sixth Form related paragraphs checked by JCG including PSHE updates

Language curriculum allocation altered

Addendum added Jan 26 (no language option block at GCSE)

Appendix 1 added Jan 26 (we no longer have a separate policy on remote learning)

Beaconsfield High School

Curriculum Policy

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1. Curriculum Intent

At Beaconsfield High School our curriculum is designed to develop girls of character—curious in thought, courageous in action, and confident in themselves. Through a rich academic and co-curricular offer, we provide opportunities for every student to discover their potential, nurture their talents, and pursue their passions. Driven by limitless ambition, our curriculum is thoughtfully planned to inspire deep learning, encourage intellectual risk-taking, and foster independence. We aim to empower our students with the knowledge, skills, and values they need to thrive—not only in school, but as active, compassionate citizens ready to shape the future with confidence and purpose.

Commented [MP1]: @Mrs T Bond this paragraph is entirely new and aims to integrate the new V&M. Thank you ChatGPT! The strikethrough is the old version for comparison. Edit as you like, but this isn't a well read document I don't think. Still needs to be vaguely true though.

2. Design and Implementation of the taught curriculum

2.1 Lesson times

The school operates a two-weekly timetable of 50 periods. This is separated into 5 periods each day.

	Autumn Term		Spring & Summer Term
2.2	Period 1 09.10 – 10.10		Period 1 9.10 - 10.10
5-	Period 2 10.10 – 11.10		Period 2 10.10 - 11.10
	Break 11.10 – 11.30		Break 11.10 - 11.30
	Period 3 11.30 – 12.30		Period 3 11.30 - 12.30
	Period 4 12.30 – 1.30		Lunch 12.30 - 1.30
	Lunch 1.30 – 2.30		Period 4 1.30 - 2.30
	Period 5 2.30 – 3.30		Period 5 2.30 - 3.30

Year Curriculum

Subjects follow a carefully planned five-year curriculum from Year 7 through to Year 11. This approach provides continuity and ensures that secure foundations are established at each key stage, supporting smooth transitions and sustained academic development. Themes and topics are deliberately sequenced to promote deep understanding and strong, sustained progress over time.

2.3 Years 7 - 9

In Years 7 to 9 students study a broad and balanced curriculum (see table below) that builds a firm foundation of the skills needed to ensure that students are GCSE ready when they enter Year 10.

2.4 Key Stage 3 Subject Table

Table: Number of hours per 2-week cycle per year group

Subject	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
English	6	6	6
Mathematics	6	6	6
Science	6	6	9
Art	2	2	2
Computing	2	2	2
Dance	1	1	1
Design and Technology	3	3	2*
<i>*(For Y9 a choice of 2 from Food Tech, Textiles & Graphics. Start the year with 1 option and halfway through the year switch to 2nd option.)</i>			
Drama	2	2	2
Geography	3	3	3
History	3	3	3
Languages			
<i>(4 French or 4 Spanish and 3 Latin in Y7 –new in 2025. A choice of 2 from French OR Spanish and Latin. Y8 & Y9 are operating legacy choices.</i>			
Music	2	2	2
PE	3	3	3
Dance	1	1	1
PSHE	1	1	1
EPIC	1		
Philosophy, Religion & Ethics	2	2	2

2.5 Skills

Our ‘Getting Life Ready’ (GLR) skills framework is woven throughout the curriculum and our wider school culture, ensuring that learning extends beyond the academic. These essential skills—resourcefulness, risk-taking, resilience, reflection, creative and critical thinking, collaboration, and commitment—are the building blocks of character. They are embedded in lessons, celebrated through our praise and reward systems, and further developed through our tutor time programme and our co-curriculum.

By nurturing these attributes, we prepare students to thrive in a complex, fast-changing world—equipped not just to succeed, but to lead with courage, curiosity, and confidence

Commented [MP2]: @Mrs T Bond updated to reflect new V&M

2.6 KS3 and KS4

We have made a deliberate decision to begin teaching GCSE content in the summer term of Year 9. This approach is designed to build greater depth and mastery of subject knowledge, support a more manageable pace of learning, and help reduce pressure on students as they transition into Key Stage 4. Students still make their GCSE option choices in the spring term of Year 9,

which ensures they benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum for as long as possible. Science remains an exception, with GCSE courses beginning earlier in Year 9, allowing all students to study three separate Sciences and experience the highest level of academic challenge.

2.7 GCSE Options Year 10-11 (see addendum 1)

In Year 10 all students will study a core GCSE curriculum of English Language, English Literature, Maths and Science. The science curriculum includes Biology, Chemistry and Physics as distinct subject areas.

Students in Year 10 and 11 are offered a broad range of GCSE subject choices as seen in the table below. Students have four option choices from three option blocks. To ensure we maintain a broad and balanced curriculum it is compulsory for students to choose one from each of option blocks 1 and 2 listed in the table below, and two 'open option' subjects listed in the table below. Student demand will dictate whether courses run. Each option subject is allotted 5 hours per subject per 2-week cycle in Year 10, and 4 hours per subject per 2-week cycle in Year 11, as shown in the table below.

2.8 Tables: Key Stage 4 Options blocks

Option 1: Foreign Language

Option 1
French
Latin
Spanish

Option 2: Humanities Subject: Geography or History:

Option 2
Geography
History

Option 3: Open Option (choice of two):

Option 3		
Art, Craft & Design	Food Prep & Nutrition	Latin
Business Studies	French	Music
Computer Science	Geography	Religious Studies
Dance	Graphic Communications	PE
Drama	History	Spanish

We communicate clearly with students and parents/carers the benefits of the English Baccalaureate (Ebacc), understanding that it contributes to a broad and balanced education, and opens doors for the future. We keep up to date with University, Apprenticeships and DfE guidelines to ensure that we are aware of any changes to current advice given, and the implications this may have for our options programme.

2.9 Key Stage 4 Subject Table

Table: Number of hours per 2-week cycle per year group

Subject	Year 10	Year 11
English	7	9
Mathematics	6	8
Science	12	12
4 Options	20 5 periods per option subject	16 4 periods per option subject

PE (core)	4	4
PSHE	1	1
Religious Studies (core)	0	1

2.10 A-

Level Choices

A-Level options include all subjects available for GCSE (with the exception of Food and Nutrition) as well as additional ones, currently: Further Mathematics, Economics, Politics, Media Studies, Classical Civilisation, Sociology and Psychology. Student numbers will determine whether or not a course is viable, and how many groups may be put on each year. Please see the KS5 Prospectus published on our website for more information.

To enter the Sixth Form, students need 46 points from their best 8 GCSEs, including Grade 5 in both English and Maths, plus specific subject entry requirements. The majority of students study 3 A-Levels, and a further option of either an EPQ, AS French or Spanish, or another suitable qualification. For students who score more than 64 GCSE points it may be possible to study a 4th A-Level. This is decided in consultation with the Head of Sixth Form and requires the 4th subject to have spaces in a class. However, we respond to university advice that having 3 strong A-Levels is preferable. Each subject is allotted 9 hours per subject per 2-week cycle, in Year 12 and Year 13.

2.11 Key Stage 5 Subject Table

Table: Number of hours per 2-week cycle per year group

Subject	Year 12	Year 13
A-Levels (including AS)	9	9
Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)	4	
PE (Y12) Work Experience (Y13)	2	Leave of Absence granted as per request -time varies
Enrichment/PSHE	2	1

Commented [MG3]: have amended figures

To maintain a broad and balanced Sixth Form curriculum, students not taking a fourth A Level subject are expected to choose from a wide-ranging programme in Year 12 that includes options such as the EPQ, AS languages, Sports Leaders, Elite Sports, music, learning a new instrument, Duke of Edinburgh, Young Enterprise, and other opportunities designed to broaden their skills and experiences.

Year 12 students also have one hour per week dedicated to a pathway that promotes their physical, mental, and intellectual wellbeing—this may include elite sport, recreational PE, sports leadership, volunteering, or mentoring. Additionally, Enrichment/PSHE sessions help develop essential life skills and expand their understanding of the wider world, covering topics such as mental health, relationships, careers, and financial education.

A wide range of extra-curricular opportunities complements this offer, including sport, music, drama, art, team projects, volunteering, work experience, leadership programmes, domestic and international trips, sports tours, and celebration events.

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3. Design and Implementation of the wider curriculum

3.1 Education Enhancing Subjects

The planning of Relationship and Sex Education, Religious Education and PSHE takes into account the Relationships and Sex Education guidance document. Sex education is taught explicitly through the science curriculum with the emotional and relationship aspects of this covered at various and suitable times within PSHE.

3.2 Religious Education

Religious Education is a statutory requirement for all schools. Students at BHS will study one period of Religious Education per week in KS3. The school also offers Religious Studies as a GCSE option and Philosophy and Ethics as an A-Level option. At key stage 4 we continue to have Core RS timetabled for students, as shown in table 2.9.

The aims are as stated in the document "Religious Education in Buckinghamshire" and "Challenging RE", the Buckinghamshire Agreed Syllabus. By endorsing this syllabus trustees believe that it enables all students to obtain a broad and balanced view of humanity and its varying religions, to develop respect for religions and moral values and tolerance of different ethnic backgrounds, religions and ways of life.

3.3 PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic education)

The school provides a spiral curriculum in line with the PSHE Association guidelines and the DfE's changes to the RSE curriculum, and we have a 7-year curriculum from Year 7 to Year 13.

PSHE is taught fortnightly in Years 7-11 and each year group also has a drop-down day once annually. The school uses this subject to promote students' personal, social, emotional and economic development. The taught curriculum will help students have healthy relationships with their minds, their bodies and others. Students will be taught to celebrate diversity and interrogate social norms and challenge stereotypes. The curriculum includes involvement and consultation with Heads of Learning, Student Welfare and our Wellbeing Team as well as external agencies and other providers. It aims to:

- Promote emotional wellbeing and mental health.
- Promote difference and acceptance.
- Allow students to learn about topics of a sensitive nature without fear of judgement, stigma or embarrassment.
- Help develop the qualities and attributes needed to thrive as individuals, family members and members of both the school and wider society, including taking responsibility for their own behaviour and showing initiative.
- Provide the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to manage lives now and in the future.
- To support students in staying safe from exploitation and abuse.
- Allow all students to contribute and benefit from learning and discussions.
- Help students to support one another and themselves as they grow and learn.

PSHE in the Sixth Form is timetabled (in Year 13 once per fortnight, and in Year 12 once weekly). Provision builds on the curriculum in Years 7-11, and is geared towards next steps and preparing students for the future. The curriculum is designed to address the diverse needs of 16-19 year old students, with a comprehensive focus which includes Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE), Spiritual, Moral, Social, and Cultural Development (SMSC), Social Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH), Religious Studies, and Careers Education and Guidance. Guest speakers and outside agencies are utilised, to deliver specialist topics. Areas covered include personal development, learning/study techniques, higher education and career planning, wellbeing/self-care, safe driving, British Values, alcohol safety and first aid, finance education, professional skills. Core Religious Studies is also covered during tutor time and through our EDI wider provision.

3.4 SMSC and British Values

All subjects cover SMSC relevant to their context, and the PSHE programme also supports this development. To highlight a few examples, in history, students explore social and moral dilemmas of the past, helping to develop critical thinking skills. In literature, students discuss diverse characters and perspectives, promoting empathy and understanding.

Assemblies, enrichment opportunities like Global Citizens Week, guest speakers, diversity celebrations throughout the year, and tutor time activities, all provide implicit and definite opportunities to reinforce spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Student council involvement allows students to develop leadership skills to advocate and contribute to shaping the direction of the school community. Through a range of strategies students develop their self-knowledge, self-confidence,

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and self-esteem, for example via the numerous societies, competitions and other student led activities. They learn about social and moral dilemmas as well as personal safety, allowing them to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the rule of law.

The curriculum covers aspects of citizenship and voting rights, healthy relationships and financial responsibility, giving them an understanding of the institutions and services in England which actively promote the fundamental British Values of democracy, support for the democratic process, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. A high-quality citizenship education helps to provide students with knowledge, skills and understanding to prepare them to play a full and active part in society. Teaching equips students with the skills and knowledge to explore political and social issues critically, to weigh evidence, debate and make reasoned arguments. It prepares students to take their place in society as responsible citizens, manage their money well and make sound financial decisions.

Throughout their time at school, students learn an appreciation of and respect for their own and other people's cultures by discussing, promoting respect and understanding for all cultures and identities. The school curriculum alongside our dedicated EDI lead, strives to ensure that all groups with protected characteristics are treated with respect and understanding. The data from our student voice surveys reflect that our students on the whole feel respected heard and included.

3.5 Careers Education and Guidance

The purpose of Careers Education and Guidance at Beaconsfield High School is to help students make their decisions about their future. We do this by:

- Increasing self-awareness and understanding of skills and competencies
- Providing an understanding of the world of work and
- Developing students' career management skills.

Careers Education and Guidance at Beaconsfield High School is provided in line with relevant legislation including statutory guidance published by the Department for Education which sets out the expectation that 'all secondary schools and colleges use the internationally recognised Gatsby Benchmarks to develop a careers programme that increases opportunities for students to access everything from experiences of the workplace and personal guidance with a careers adviser, to engagement with employers, colleges, training providers and universities'.

Careers Education and Guidance is delivered from Years 7-13 through a range of mediums including PSHE, a dedicated area of the school website where information and opportunities are posted regularly, independent careers advice, guest speakers, networking events, work insight, preparation for interviews. As a high achieving grammar school most of our students opt for university; however, we expose students to the wider range of possibilities for life after school whether it be university, apprenticeships or a job, and also to the value of work experience. Further information can be found in the CEIAG Policy and on our careers page on the school website.

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3.6 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Curriculum development is an ongoing process that requires a continuous focus on relevance and responsiveness to the needs of today's world. In light of this, it has become increasingly evident that curriculum development should adopt an intersectional approach, encompassing a wide range of perspectives, lived experiences, and diversity, equity and equality considerations. The key principles include: respect, fairness, inclusion, and awareness.

To ensure that our curriculum is inclusive and fit for purpose, it is essential to incorporate a comprehensive understanding of different ethnic, religious, and racial backgrounds, as well as the experiences of the LGBT+ community. Additionally, we must emphasise disability awareness and promote mental and emotional wellbeing throughout our curriculum.

This broader aspect of the curriculum is regularly reviewed and aligned with the School Improvement Plan. Since 2021, the school has taken proactive measures by appointing a designated Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) lead. This ensures that curriculums within the school embrace a lateral, comprehensive lens that encompasses all facets of EDI, which are integrated into all aspects of our curriculum, from academic subjects to co-curricular activities. By adopting this approach, our curriculum aims to create an inclusive learning environment that celebrates diversity, fosters understanding, and promotes social justice.

Our commitment to EDI ensures that students have access to a well-rounded education that prepares them to thrive in an interconnected and diverse world. We will continue to evolve and refine our curriculum to meet the evolving needs of our students and reflect the values of inclusivity, equality, and respect.

4. The curriculum and student groups

4.1 SEND

A number of students have special educational needs or disabilities, for example neurodiversity, and are supported according to their level of need. These students enter the school with a high level of prior attainment. Students with Education, Health and Care Plans may receive individual support in line with their plan to ensure access to the whole curriculum. For example, students may be assisted by a structured programme of support with external specialist teachers also involve. Students on SEND Support (K) are supported by Quality First Teaching (as part of the Graduated Approach recommended by the 2014 SEND Code of Practice) and the Buckinghamshire Council Ordinarily Available Provision guidance. Students are provided with targeted classroom support and progress is closely monitored. If evidence supports, in line with JCQ regulations, these students may be allocated extra time or other appropriate adjustments in examinations as part of exam access arrangements. The school SENCO is responsible for the provision of exam access arrangements, guided by all relevant supporting evidence. When concerns are raised about students with regards to a possible SEND need, we will carry out an initial screening, review the student's performance, and if necessary, will investigate this further.

4.2 English as an Additional Language

Very few students entering Beaconsfield High School are at an early stage of learning English. However, if any need arises for students whose first language is not English, the school identifies and assists as necessary, liaising with the local authority over additional support such as tutoring, ensuring extra resources are in place and that teaching staff make the necessary additional adjustments to support them in class.

4.3 Disadvantaged students and Looked-after children

Beaconsfield High School has a small number of disadvantaged students. These students enter the school with high levels of prior attainment and are fully supported to ensure they have aspiration and can achieve their full potential; our Pupil Premium funding is used to ensure they have full access to the resources and enrichment/co-curricular activities available to the student body as a whole.

4.4 Most Able Students

Due to the selective nature of Beaconsfield High School, all of our students can be considered 'most able', as they enter the school with high levels of prior attainment. As such we provide Quality First Teaching that makes learning challenging, engaging and exciting, and which enables all students to reach their full potential. Students are stretched through targeted and challenging tasks. We are dedicated to responsive teaching which is about meeting the needs of all students.

5. Curriculum Impact - Monitoring and Review

The Headteacher, in consultation with the staff and students, will undertake systematic monitoring and conduct regular reviews of the curriculum policy and procedures in order to evaluate and ensure that the operation is effective, fair and consistent. The Headteacher will keep the Board of Trustees informed. The Board of Trustees will regularly review this policy and associated procedures, to ensure its continuing appropriateness and effectiveness in meeting the needs of students at BHS. The outcome of the review will be communicated to all those involved, as appropriate.

6. Curriculum Adjustments

6.1 Withdrawing students from subjects (KS3 and KS4)

All students are expected to study the core programme at KS3. For information on requesting to withdraw a child from Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), please see the policy.

The school will review individual needs as requested on a case-by-case basis. The curriculum we offer is broad, inclusive and diverse, to give all of our students a breadth of qualifications and opportunities. In the most exceptional of circumstances, and by agreement with the school, students may request to withdraw from a subject. This is known as a curriculum modification request.

Such decisions will be based on any special educational needs and/or medical reasons, and a review of the student's data (progress, attainment, attendance, attitude to learning etc). Explanations such as a student needing to study for their other subjects or because they no longer enjoy a subject are not considered reasonable. Any final decision to be withdrawn from a subject may only be confirmed by the SLT Lead. In KS3 decisions on curriculum modifications will take place in collaboration with HOL, SENDCo and SLT Lead. In KS4 parents/carers should contact the Head of Faculty (HOF) in the first instance, to discuss support in the subject in question, to enable continued study of the subject. The Head of Faculty will liaise with the Head of department and then with the Deputy Headteacher.

Stage 1: Parent/carer communication with HOF. HOF to oversee support and interventions in collaboration with HOD (this should result in an appropriate time for reasonable adjustments/intervention to take effect, with monitoring).

Stage 2: HOF communication with Deputy Headteacher.

Stage 3: DHT/ HT final decision.

7. Curriculum Impact

The impact of our curriculum is assessed by considering:

- Statutory curriculum guidance.
- External examination results at both GCSE and A-Level, including the numbers gaining top grades in a wide variety of subjects.
- The range and variety of extra-curricular and enrichment activities and students' participation in them as indicated by student surveys and the achievement of externally validated awards.
- The retention of students from Year 11 into Becky High Sixth.
- The numbers of students applying to join the School in Year 7 and Year 12.
- The proportion of students who are able to choose the courses they want to at GCSE and at A-Level.
- The destinations of our leavers at Year 11 and Year 13.
- Quality assurance processes including learning walks, work scrutiny, lesson visits and department/curriculum reviews.
- Annual reviews of the PSHE and assembly programme.
- Parent/carer and student voice related to selected themes.

Addendum 1

Following the release of the Curriculum and assessment Review November 2025 changes to option choices have been made. All students will take English Language, English Literature, Maths, Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Students must opt for either Geography or History. All other subjects (including Geography and History) will sit in an open option block, and students will select 3 options to accompany the other 7 subjects. The requirement to take a language has been removed. We will encourage breadth and balance in option choices.

Appendix 1: Remote Learning Arrangements

This appendix clarifies the school's position on remote learning and should be read alongside the main Curriculum Policy. Beaconsfield High School is clear that in-person attendance is always the default and preferred mode of education. Remote learning is not considered an equivalent alternative to attending school.

Remote learning will only be used in exceptional circumstances where the school is unable to open to pupils, or where opening would be unsafe or contrary to government or local authority guidance.

When remote learning may be used

Remote learning will only be implemented when:

- The school is required to close fully or partially due to circumstances beyond its control (for example, public health emergencies, severe site issues, or directions from local or central government), and
- Pupils are unable to attend school in person as a direct result of this closure.

In these situations, remote learning is a temporary measure designed to maintain continuity of education until normal school operations can resume.

Remote learning will not be used as:

- A routine alternative to attendance
- A response to poor attendance
- A sanction for behaviour

Relationship to attendance

All pupils are expected to attend school in line with the Attendance Policy. Where the school is open, pupils should be on site unless formally authorised otherwise. Pupils accessing remote learning due to full or partial school closure will be recorded in line with statutory attendance guidance.

Curriculum continuity

When remote learning is required due to school closure, the curriculum will:

- Remain aligned with the school's planned curriculum intent and sequencing
- Focus on high-quality, meaningful learning rather than volume of tasks
- Prioritise core knowledge and skills to support smooth reintegration when pupils return to school

Subject leaders and senior leaders will ensure that provision is proportionate, realistic, and consistent across subjects.

Safeguarding, SEND and inclusion

During any period of remote learning:

- Safeguarding arrangements will remain in line with the school's Child Protection Policy and any relevant addenda
- Reasonable adjustments will be made to support pupils with SEND or additional needs
- The school will take steps to identify and mitigate barriers to access, including digital access where possible

Monitoring and review

Any period of remote learning will be kept under regular review by senior leaders, with a clear expectation that pupils return to full, in-person education as soon as it is safe and practicable to do so.

This appendix reinforces the school's commitment to high-quality, face-to-face education and makes explicit that remote learning is used only when the school cannot open, not as a routine or preferred model of delivery.