

Title and Description	Curriculum Policy
Date of last review	March 2026
Approved by	Local Governing Board
To be reviewed by	Quality of Education Sub-Committee
Responsibility	Headteacher
Review period	Annually
Date of next review	September 2026

**This policy reflects the curriculum which is in place as of 25/26 but a new curriculum policy will be adopted (with some significant changes) as of 26/27 which will be available on the website in September, or upon request.*

Below is an AI generated summary of the full policy, produced to help make this document more accessible. The summary has been checked for accuracy, but the full policy remains the only completely accurate version.

Summary of the Curriculum policy

Aims and Values

The curriculum is designed to promote academic excellence, respect, and compassion. It upholds British values, ensuring democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect. It also fosters student happiness, ambition, resilience, and lifelong learning.

Curriculum Principles

- Inclusive for all learners, including those with additional needs.
- Supports students' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural (SMSC) development.
- Encourages responsibility for physical and mental well-being.
- Prepares students for higher education and employment through independent learning and resilience.
- Embeds careers education in line with Gatsby Benchmarks.
- Prioritises knowledge retention through retrieval practice and sequenced learning.
- Promotes English Baccalaureate entry to maintain academic breadth.

Key Stage 3 & 4 Structure

- Broad curriculum in Years 7-8, with personalisation in Year 9.
- Core subjects (Maths, English, Science) prioritised for academic progression.
- Focus on creativity through the arts (Drama, Music, Art).
- Weekly reading lessons for Years 7-8.
- Most students study a Modern Language and either History or Geography for 5 years.
- GCSE subjects taught over two years with sufficient time allocation.

Key Stage 5 Structure

- Students take three A-level (or equivalent) subjects, with optional enhancements (EPQ, Further Maths, Criminology, etc.).
- Work experience in Year 12.
- Focus on academic excellence and career readiness.

Inclusion & Support

- High expectations for all students, including those with SEND and EAL.
- Lessons designed to remove barriers to learning.
- Careers guidance and personalised advice provided at transition points.

Governance & Responsibility

- The Local Governing Board oversees curriculum effectiveness and compliance.
- The Headteacher ensures curriculum implementation, assessment, and provision for diverse needs.

This policy aligns with statutory requirements and supports student success through a well-structured, inclusive, and forward-thinking curriculum.

CURRICULUM POLICY

1. Aims of our curriculum

Framwellgate School Durham: Ethos and Values Statement

Like all good schools, we're driven by our values above all else. We define these as:

Excellence - Everyone in our community will know and experience success

The most for those that need the most - We will meet the needs of all our learners

Known and valued - Everyone here will be celebrated for who they are and what they do

Collective endeavour - We will achieve success together

Joy - Everyone will know and create joy

These five values determine all that we do, and every part of the school flows from them. They set the direction and act as a compass to ensure we continue to grow and develop as a school in the way that we feel best supports all our students.

We aim to develop confident and self-disciplined learners who follow a curriculum that embraces the shared values of the school encapsulated in our ethos and values statement. Our curriculum:

- supports our ethos and values, including fundamental British Values including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- Is fully inclusive; ensuring that those learners with additional needs or barriers to their learning are given equal opportunities to succeed through adaptations and scaffolding
- supports students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- supports students' physical development and responsibility for their own health and well-being
- promotes respect for other people irrespective of sex, race, religion, ability, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, socio-economic group, or age
- develops students' independent learning, resilience, and the other essential life skills needed to equip them for further/higher education and employment
- develops students' understanding of the world of work, through an ambitious careers programme

2. Principles

Our curriculum is constructed so that:

- teaching builds on students' previously acquired knowledge at each key stage
- it is ambitious, broad and balanced, and designed to give all students the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life
- it is coherently planned and carefully sequenced

- lessons offer sufficient opportunities to retrieve prior learning so that it can be embedded into students' long-term memory, and the knowledge can be applied with increasing confidence
- students are able to practise and apply what they have learnt
- SMSC is embedded into pastoral and curriculum programmes, and students experience a careers education that meets the Gatsby Benchmarks
- the majority of students are entered for the English Baccalaureate at the end of Year 11, as part of their academically broad and balanced curriculum
- PSHE and Personal Development lessons are integral to developing students who are not only ambitious, kind, resilient and hardworking, but who understand the world around them, are ready to learn, and who are prepared for the wider world.

3. Relevant policies and publications

This policy reflects the requirement for academies to provide a broad and balanced curriculum as per the Academies Act 2010. It also reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014 and Equality Act 2010, and refers to curriculum-related expectations of governing boards set out in the Department for Education's Governance Handbook. It complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

This policy should also be read in conjunction with the school's Sex and Relationships Education Policy, our Special Educational Needs & Disabilities and Inclusion Policy, our Equality, Diversity and Community Cohesion Policy, and the Curriculum and Careers sections of our website which list the curriculum content for each subject and our careers education provision.

4. Organisation and planning of the curriculum

Key Stages 3 and 4

Our curriculum is designed to build on our students' prior learning at each stage of their education, and offer progression to further or higher education, and work. It is not defined by artificial divisions between key stages but is coherent and relevant to the needs of our students.

Throughout a student's time in school, the curriculum will broaden or narrow at different stages. We recognise that in Year 6, the curriculum will have likely been focussed more on maths and English and less on foundation subjects. In Years 7 and 8 the curriculum widens to provide students with a broad range of academic knowledge. A degree of personalisation in Year 9 then allows students to choose from their preferred arts and technology subjects and study a second language if they wish before they make their option choices before the start of Year 10.

Key features of our KS3 and KS4 curriculum

The context of our school and students, and our ethos and values, have shaped our curriculum as follows:

- a focus on happiness, well-being and healthy lifestyles through the provision of 4 hours of Core PE each fortnight, throughout years 7-with 2 hours per fortnight in Year 10-11
- high expectations of all students and a commitment to academic excellence means that all students study English Literature and the majority study a Modern Language AND Geography or History for 5 years
- all subjects offered for examination at the end of Key Stage 4 are full GCSEs (or equivalent), taught for a minimum of 2 years, and with the time allocation necessary to provide depth to the learning

- a recognition that the core subjects (maths; English; science) provide the best progression routes to 6th form study and rewarding careers is reflected in the time allocated to them
- a focus on the arts and creativity allows students to develop confidence and build relationships (for this reason, drama is a discrete subject at KS3)
- a focus on the importance of reading as a vehicle for success across the whole curriculum

Prior learning

Our focus on academic excellence requires that students have the depth of knowledge and the skills necessary to progress through the key stages. This means:

- understanding the prior learning that has taken place at primary school
- The schools' internal assessment processes (both formative and summative) are used to help establish students' starting points; thus ensuring that we can measure a students' progress through the curriculum.
- designing a curriculum for Key Stage 3 to contain the body of knowledge the students will need to start GCSE study in Key Stage 4

The curriculum by year group*

Subject	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11
Maths	7	7	7	8	8
English	7	7	7	8	8
Science <small>(Note 1)</small>	6	6	9	9	9
PE	4	4	4	2	2
Geography	3	3	4		
History	3	3	4		
Geography or History				5	5
Religious Studies	2	2	3	3	3
French	4	4	4	5	5
Design Technology	2	2	2+2		
Cooking and Nutrition	2	2			
Computer Science	2	2			
Music	2	2	2+2		
Art	2	2			
Drama	2	2			
Reading	2	2			
Option 1				5	5
Option 2				5	5
Hours per fortnight	50	50	50	50	50

*The allocations above are correct for September 2025

Note

Most of our students will take a dual award science course at GCSE level (Trilogy Science). Those students who wish to take three GCSE subjects as separate sciences can choose to study this through their option choices in Years 10 and 11.

Key features of our KS5 curriculum

Programmes of study are designed with prior learning at GCSE in mind. All students take 3 A Level (or equivalent) subjects, and all will enhance their curriculum by taking a further subject (Extended Project Qualification, A Level Further Maths, Criminology, Sports Leadership programmes, for example).

All Year 12 students have one week's work experience which helps prepare students for specific careers. The hours per fortnight are allocated as follows:

Subject	Y12	Y13
Option 1	10	10
Option 2	10	10
Option 3	10	10
Personal Development inc tutor programme	4.5	4.5
Enhancement, support & community	6-12	
Hours per fortnight	40-46	40-46

Information, advice and guidance

Providing high quality information, advice and guidance is a prerequisite for allowing progression through the curriculum. In addition to the careers education and guidance provided at each key stage (see website for details), we produce high quality materials for students and parents, and options evenings for each student/parent/carer at the key transition points.

5. Inclusion

Teachers set high expectations for all students. They use appropriate assessment to set ambitious targets and plan challenging work for all groups of students. Teachers plan lessons so that students with SEN and/or disabilities can study every National Curriculum subject, wherever possible, and ensure that there are no barriers to every student achieving. Teachers will also take account of the needs of students whose first language is not English. Lessons will be planned so that teaching helps students to develop their English, and to support students to take part in all subjects. Further information can be found in our Special Educational Needs & Disabilities and Inclusion Policy, our Equality, Diversity and Community Cohesion Policies (available on our website).

6. Roles and Responsibilities

The Local Governing Board will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation and impact. They will also ensure that:

- a robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational student targets
- the school is complying with its funding agreement and teaching a "broad and balanced curriculum" which includes English, maths, and science, and enough teaching time is provided for students to cover the requirements of the funding agreement
- it participates actively in decision-making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum
- proper provision is made for students with different abilities and needs, including children with special educational needs and disabilities
- all courses provided for students below the age of 19 that lead to qualifications, such as GCSEs and A-levels, are approved by the Secretary of State
- the school implements the relevant statutory assessment arrangements

The **Headteacher** is responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented, and that:

- all required elements of the curriculum, and those subjects which the school chooses to offer, have aims and objectives which reflect the aims of the school and indicate how the needs of individual students will be met
- the amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed annually by the Local Governing Board
- they manage requests to withdraw children from curriculum subjects, where appropriate
- the school's procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements
- the Local Governing Board is fully involved in decision-making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum
- the Local Governing Board is advised on whole-school targets in order to make informed decisions
- proper provision is in place for students with different abilities and needs, including SEND.