

## **CURRICULUM POLICY**

In line with our desire to provide a broad and balanced education for our students, this policy touches on our extra- and co-curricular provision as well as the academic curriculum.

As a general principle, our academic curriculum subsumes and extends beyond the requirements of the National Curriculum. At KS4, our students prepare for GCSE (Year 11) and IGCSE (Year 11i in the International Section) examinations. Our Sixth Formers prepare for A levels.

This policy is in two sections: the first sets out the overall aims and principles that inform our approach and practice throughout the school. The second sets out details of the curriculum for the different age groups.

### **Overall aims and principles**

- To offer a broad, balanced and stimulating curriculum with a strong academic core;
- To take into account the individual needs and aptitudes, and to develop the particular talents, of all of our students as far as we possibly can, including any who may have an EHC (Education, Health and Care) plan;
- To ensure that, through our curriculum and our approach to teaching and to our extra- and co-curricular provision, we 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;
- To promote a broad, tolerant and open-minded understanding of the world around us, including an appreciation of the democratic process and precluding the promotion of partisan political views in the classroom, in extra- and co-curricular activities, or in any other aspect of the school's activities;
- To offer a wide range of subjects and, where appropriate, to offer students a wide range of options and as much flexibility as we can in subject choice;
- To ensure a curriculum that offers continuity and progression of learning within and across Key Stages;
- To maintain the highest standards of teaching;
- To maintain a vibrant and effective learning environment in which students are engaged and stimulated both by the curriculum and by the teaching;
- To ensure that every student is able to achieve to the maximum of his or her potential throughout the ability range, with effective differentiation to account for varying abilities, paces and styles of learning;
- To provide ample opportunities to stretch and challenge the most able whilst also providing all the necessary support for those who need it;

- To make learning an enjoyable experience, and to stimulate curiosity and an enthusiasm for active and independent learning;
- To foster the intellectual and study skills and habits on which students will be able to draw in higher education and in the workplace;
- To ensure that students with learning difficulties and disabilities (SEND) and those whose first language is not English are appropriately supported;
- To provide personal, social, health and economic education which reflects the ethos of our school, which is appropriate, both in its content and the way in which it is delivered, to the age, experience and needs of the students, and which encourages tolerance and respect for others, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act, 2010 (see Appendix for the list of protected characteristics);
- To help our international students to adjust to the practical, cultural and academic consequences of living and studying in a different country;
- To supplement the taught curriculum by a diverse range of curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities that will provide further stimulus, richness and breadth to the students' educational experience;
- To provide accurate and up to date careers guidance that is presented in an impartial manner, that encourages all students to fulfil their potential and enables them to make informed choices about a broad range of study and career options;
- To ensure that the educational experience we provide gives our students an effective preparation for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society in particular, and more generally in a world that is increasingly global in its outlook.

### **Actively promoting fundamental British values**

The active promotion of the fundamental values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of others, including those with different faiths and beliefs, has long been deeply embedded in our school's ethos and in our day-to-day practice, both in and out of the classroom.

### **A non-partisan approach to political, ethical and religious issues**

A healthy understanding of the world around us is an important part of the educational experience that we want to provide for our students. In doing so, the emphasis will always be on open-mindedness, tolerance and critical evaluation – encouraging students to appreciate that, where moral, ethical, religious or political questions are concerned, there is always likely to be a multiplicity of viewpoints, and stressing the need to respect the views of others.

When such issues arise, in subject teaching or in the context of co-curricular or extra-curricular activities (such as Debating Club) we will always ensure that we offer a balanced presentation of opposing views which precludes the promotion of partisan opinions or dogma.

## **Personal, social, health and economic education**

The detail of our policy and practice in this area is set out in the schemes of work for the Personal Development programme and in the school's policy on the Moral, Spiritual, Social and Cultural development of pupils.

## **Careers education**

Careers guidance, including advice on choosing GCSE subjects and post-16 and higher education courses as well as more vocational options, is provided as appropriate throughout the age range.

We aim to ensure that such guidance is accurate, well informed and up to date; and that it is delivered impartially, with the aim of encouraging students to fulfil their personal potential and helping them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options.

We aim, in our career guidance, to avoid any form of stereotyping, and seek to ensure that girls and boys from all backgrounds and diversity groups consider the widest possible range of careers including those that have traditionally tended to have a bias towards the opposite gender.

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## **THE CURRICULUM**

### **Years 7-11**

#### **The Taught Curriculum**

##### **Years 7-9**

In Years 7-9 pupils are taught in mixed ability groups except for Maths where classes are setted according to ability.

All pupils follow a broad curriculum, embracing Mathematics, English (including Literature), Geography, History, Latin and Classical Civilisation, Information Technology / Computing, Art, Music, Drama, Physical Education, Personal Development and Religious Education. A General Science course taught by specialists in Years 7 and 8 leads to the separate sciences from Year 9 onwards.

A commitment to fluency in foreign languages is reflected in the provision of French from Year 7 with the addition of Spanish from Year 8. German, Italian, Russian and Mandarin Chinese may also be studied after school, subject to demand.

##### **Years 10 -11**

The majority of our students study 10 GCSEs and option groups are created with a view to maintaining a good level of student choice. Students follow a balanced programme with Maths, English Language and Literature, a modern foreign language, and a humanities subject being mandatory. We also expect all students to study for Triple Award Science- effectively separate Biology, Chemistry and Physics- although it may be the case that a small minority will only be entered for the double award paper, dependent on their level of progress. We would consequently expect the great majority of our students to be eligible for the English Baccalaureate at the end of their course.

During their GCSE years, pupils will also receive guidance on preparation for public examinations, careers and their options for Sixth Form and further education.

### **Personalised Learning**

One of our most important aims at d'Overbroeck's is that we tailor what we do to the needs of the child – our aim is for each individual to meet their academic, social and personal potential. All children have learning needs that are particular to them and one of our strengths as a school with small class sizes is our ability to tailor the learning experience to the individual. So, if a child has a gift or talent for a subject or other learning needs we have strategies in place to meet these.

Where students need to be stretched we can employ three main strategies to do so:

**Extension:** this is about depth. We encourage students to apply higher order thinking skills. Students follow the standard curriculum but develop a deeper understanding.

**Enrichment:** this is about breadth and means going beyond the usual limits of a subject or topic. We will deliver enrichment through a programme of activities which might include, for example: Wednesday afternoon activities for KS3; entering and preparing for competitions such as the UKMT Maths Challenge, Salter Science projects, public speaking and debating; school concerts and dramatic productions; theatre visits; master classes; trips; one off days eg Nat West Financial Awareness.

Our enrichment programme is usually open to all students in that they may all apply to take part. In some cases there may be an element of selection e.g. where a limited number are needed for a team.

**Acceleration:** this is about pace. It involves students working at the level of an older age group. We will adopt this strategy only in exceptional circumstances where it is essential to meeting the needs of a particular student.

We maintain a register of students who have been identified by staff as outstandingly gifted and / or talented. Students may be added to or removed from the register as appropriate, and the register will be formally reviewed and updated annually. The register will include a summary of provision for individual students so that we can review the quality of our enrichment in particular.

We will support students through the usual pastoral mechanism of Form Teachers and staff are supported in differentiating effectively through ongoing CPD.

We are also happy to offer places to those children who will require curriculum support if they fulfil our wider academic criteria and if we are satisfied that we can offer them a complete package of such support. Clearly, we will only accept students for whom we are confident that, as a school, we can make appropriate provision.

Our aim is to remove barriers to learning and to enable those students who require support to enjoy equal access to the curriculum and to achieve results commensurate with their abilities, so far as this is practically possible. We also want to build confidence and self-esteem and equip students with the necessary practical skills for future success

Teaching staff are committed to, and experienced in, providing a classroom environment which enhances the learning opportunities of all students. This means that although some children may benefit from one-to-one support sessions, many will find that their needs can be met through the medium of small mainstream classes with differentiated activities.

All children receiving learning support in Years 7-11 are provided with an Individual Education Plan, which is reviewed termly, and we monitor need and progress very carefully. No additional charge is made for learning support lessons.

### **Personal Development (PD)**

The PD curriculum is broad and wide-ranging and covers personal, social, moral, health and economic education. It is designed to inform, to help develop life skills, to stimulate students into thinking critically about moral, ethical and social issues, to appreciate that different people may hold different views, to develop the ability to articulate one's own opinions while being able to listen to others and to respect their points of view, and to foster tolerance of other people and lifestyles, with particular regard to the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

### **Religious Education**

d'Overbroeck's is not associated with, or committed to promoting, any one particular faith or religious belief. However, we believe that it is important for young people to gain an open-minded understanding of a range of religious and spiritual traditions as well as investigating social and moral issues. REP (Religion, Ethics and Philosophy) is therefore a part of the core curriculum up to and including Year 9 and available as an option thereafter.

### **Sex and Relationships Education**

We provide sex and relationships education as part of the Personal Development programme. The PD curriculum is designed to help young people to develop self-esteem, self-responsibility as well as the understanding and attitudes that will help them to form caring stable relationships.

As in other aspects of school life, we aim to offer a broad and balanced view which reflects the nature of the world in which we live and which fosters a respect for the rights, beliefs and lifestyles of other people, reflecting current legislation and paying particular regard to the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

### **Physical Education**

All pupils are expected to take part in the Physical Education programme. We see this as a crucial part of a child's physical, intellectual and social development. The aim is to encourage participation and skills development through enjoyment and good sportsmanship.

All year groups enjoy a minimum of two double lessons of Physical Education per week with the possibility of extra-curricular sport on Wednesday afternoons. The sports taught are the traditional seasonal sports of rugby, hockey, football, netball, swimming, tennis, cricket, rounders and athletics although in recent years we have rung the changes with handball, climbing, dance, trampolining, squash, Martial Arts, Yoga and Pilates classes.

Year 10 students also have the opportunity to gain the Sports Leaders Award and to follow the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme.

For those students wishing to follow the academic route for Physical Education, the GCSE course is offered. Students choosing this option will follow separate additional theory and practical lessons with a view to examination after two years.

In addition to curriculum-based sport, we offer a wide-ranging extra-curricular programme including sailing, sculling, riding, archery, golf, judo and dance. Our fixture list is growing steadily and we play a variety of schools, believing that a degree of healthy competition is useful for developing individual skills and team spirit. We regard it as vital, however, that everyone has the chance to play in a team and that they enjoy the experience.

Pupils can only be excused from Physical Education lessons for medical reasons, (for which a note from a parent will suffice), or for other reasons agreed with the school. This, however, does not exclude them from making a contribution to lessons as a coach, official or assistant, or from gaining additional knowledge through observation.

### **The Extended Curriculum**

A range of clubs and activities is on offer both during the school day and afterwards, designed to broaden pupils' experience and improve their skills and knowledge. Pupils have opportunities to participate in activities that may be closely related to the subjects they study during the day, for example in our range of subject 'clinics' and clubs, or that may open up a new experience as in our debating society, chess club or the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme.

One afternoon a week is also devoted to extra-curricular activities with students being required to opt for a different activity each half term. These may include football, basketball, netball, table tennis, archery, sailing, golf, sculling, cookery, art & crafts, plastic kit modelling, photography, drama, judo, choir and orchestra. In addition, a number of other activities take place after school from sports fixtures to music, dance or riding clubs.

Homework forms an important part of the extended curriculum. It will be concerned with research, problem solving, the reinforcement of learning, and encouraging pupils to use their initiative. Homework follows an agreed appropriate timetable, known to parents, pupils and staff.

Cross-curricular activities will also be developed in which pupils investigate particular themes that transcend conventional subject and timetable boundaries.

Work experience in Year 10 is also an integral part of the extended curriculum.

### **Work Experience**

The overall aim of work experience is to contribute to pupils' education by giving them a foretaste of working life, and helping to prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adulthood.

Pupils in Year 10 are given the opportunity to go out on a one week placement usually in May. Staff are encouraged to visit students on placements. Employers are asked to give us information on students' performance which can prove very enlightening.

Work experience is arranged under the aegis of the Oxfordshire work experience partnership who organise placements and insurance and deal with Health and Safety issues.

## **The Sixth Form**

### **The Taught Curriculum**

Despite the demise of modular AS and A Levels and the national move to linear A Levels, our core A level curriculum continues to be based on the majority of students studying four A Level subjects in the Lower Sixth, normally reducing to three in the Upper Sixth.

We believe that the opportunity to study four subjects for at least part of the Sixth Form is important, both from the educational perspective of providing a greater breadth of study and a wider educational experience; and from a more pragmatic one, whereby students have time to identify where their aptitudes and interests lie and to select their best three subjects for completion as A levels in the Upper Sixth.

In practice, we always respond to individual needs, so some students will drop the fourth subject somewhat earlier than the end of the Lower Sixth year and others will continue with four subjects right through to A Level (especially where one is Further Maths). On occasions it is possible for student to complete a fifth A level.

### **Choice of subjects**

We offer a wide range of subjects at A level. While the timetable operates on an option block basis, small class sizes and multiple groups for most subjects mean that we are able to offer students almost unlimited flexibility in subject choice.

In general we encourage an element of complementarity in subject choice (e.g. selecting a humanity alongside a science-dominated programme and *vice versa*).

### **Progression to the Upper Sixth**

- Our expectation is that students who embark on the A Level programme will complete it, so progression is in the great majority of cases assured; only if there are strong reasons to indicate that this is inappropriate is progression brought into question.
- Having said that, a strong academic performance at the end of the Lower Sixth provides the best platform for progression to the Upper Sixth. Conversely, a weak performance at the end of the first year would suggest that a student has not done enough to be able to make a success of the generally more demanding work they will encounter in the second year. We therefore monitor students' progress very carefully throughout the Lower Sixth, using a range of indicators, including attendance, performance in homework assignments and progress tests at various points in the year and we attach particular importance to the summer term mocks in May.
- Where progress indicators over the year have given significant cause for concern, we will need to discuss their future plans during the course of the summer term of the Lower Sixth. We will, of course, take account of any genuine extenuating circumstances such as a serious illness during the year. Where there are no such extenuating circumstances, a student who does not meet the minimum requirement for progression to the Upper Sixth may be required to repeat the Lower Sixth if she/he is to remain at the school.

### **Breadth and extension**

Stretch and extension activities are part and parcel of our classroom teaching. In addition, we regularly enter students for national competitions such as the UK Maths Challenge, science and maths Olympiads, essay, poetry and other creative writing competitions, etc. The EPQ (Extended Project Qualification) offers a valuable opportunity for students to pursue their interest in a particular topic and to develop a host of higher-level academic skills in the process. Extension classes, such as the Biology *plus*, are run for the benefit of Oxbridge candidates and those applying for medicine and veterinary science. Similar extension classes are regularly offered in a range of other subjects including Maths, Economics, English Literature and Physics. Speakers, often from our local universities, are invited to speak to students on topics of particular interest – either as part of the Lower Sixth Enrichment programme or as stand-alone events. Subject departments also frequently arrange to take students to events, lectures, talks and performances both locally and further afield.

### **Provision for students with SEND – the Independent Learning Skills workshops**

Our small classes and our emphasis on teaching to every student in the class mean that, in the majority of cases, we are able to cater for the needs of students with SEND in classes without the need for additional learning support sessions. However, where we feel a student would benefit from such support, and this applies whether or not the student has been identified as having a specific SEND issue, the student will have the opportunity to attend the Independent Learning Skills workshops.

These timetabled sessions are designed to help students to explore different learning techniques, to find those that work most effectively for them and then to develop the ability to use these independently to aid their own learning - at A level, at university and in their working lives beyond that.

As the title suggests, the aim of the ILS sessions is to enable students to become effective independent learners – rather than to breed a dependence on on-going learning support. Students attend for as long as they need in order to develop their learning.

### **Provision for students whose first language is not English**

Prospective students whose first language is not English are first assessed at the time of application. Only those whose English language is sufficiently strong to enable them to embark successfully on an AS programme will be offered a place. EAL support is then offered to these students as part of their course here.

The primary aim of the EAL programme is to equip our international students with the language and communication skills that we believe are essential for academic success at A level and in their further studies beyond.

All students whose first language is not English will be expected to attend classes in EAL for the full duration of their first year in the Sixth Form. Exceptions will be made only where we are fully satisfied, at the point of enrolment, that the student's command of English is already of a very high standard and that s/he has a formal qualification in English at a standard that is sufficient to meet the academic entry requirements of good UK universities.

Students studying EAL will be entered for the Trinity examination, usually at the end of their first year in the Sixth Form. We expect most of our students to achieve high Trinity scores at this point.

Students who have not achieved a result that is sufficient to ensure that entrance requirements to top universities are met, will continue to have EAL lessons in the Upper Sixth, until they have achieved the necessary qualifications.

### **Classroom Teaching**

We believe strongly that small and interactive classes are very important. Our maximum class size in the Sixth Form is usually 10. This gives students the opportunity to debate ideas and to form and share their own opinions, and enables us to generate an academic atmosphere of collective support and engagement whilst also allowing the time and opportunity to address the individual needs of each student.

### **The Extended Curriculum**

A busy and wide-ranging programme of extra-curricular activities is an important feature of life in the Sixth Form. We believe that involvement in these activities promotes a sense of teamwork, individual confidence and collective goodwill.

- A number of clubs and activities take place each week including a range of individual and team sports, drama, music, art, yoga, debating, environmental awareness, Duke of Edinburgh, Young Enterprise – and many more besides. There are also several weekend trips, activities and visits during the year.
- Lower Sixth students are expected to take part in at least two activities of their choice each week. When they reach the Upper Sixth, students are free to decide whether or not to take part in the Activities programme – though participation continues to be valued and encouraged, and we hope that most students will carry on with their chosen Activities throughout the Sixth Form.
- We also run an Enrichment programme for Lower Sixth students. It is intended to broaden students' horizons and to encourage them to engage more fully with the wider world around them. It consists of a series of talks and workshops covering a wide variety of topics that could include anything from cutting edge science to challenging talks on moral, political and social issues, and from drugs and alcohol awareness to the adventures of polar explorers.

### **Higher Education and Careers Advice**

The great majority of our students go on to higher education at a university, medical school, art school, etc – and we see it as a crucial part of our responsibility to devote a great deal of time and resources to guiding and supporting students through the process of gathering information, thinking through the options, making decisions and completing the necessary applications.

Students who choose not to go on to higher education but who wish instead to pursue more vocational alternatives are equally supported and helped to explore options and to make the necessary decisions and applications.

The Careers and Higher Education programme in the Sixth Form includes the following elements.

- The programme begins in the autumn term of the Lower Sixth when students have the opportunity to take part in the Futurewise programme offered by ISCO (the Independent Schools Careers Organisation). Futurewise is a personalised career guidance and planning service which helps students to identify the career directions that are best suited to their

interests and strengths and which goes on to provide relevant up-to-date information and on-line resources that students can continue to use up to the age of 23.

- In the second term of the Lower Sixth – a series of events and activities designed to inform and galvanise students to start them thinking and considering their options in increasing detail, e.g. sessions run by speakers from local universities.
- In the latter part of the summer term – an intensive programme of events which includes workshops led by university admissions tutors; careers organizations and gap year providers; an Alumni Day when former students come back to share their experiences of their subject, department and of university life more generally; and a Careers Evening to which we invite parents to contribute.
- During this period and into the Autumn Term of Upper Sixth – students, with the help of their Director of Studies, start to work in earnest on their UCAS personal statement, which, for most students, is probably the most time consuming element of the application. Directors of Studies, supported by subject experts, spend a good deal of time working with each student to give guidance and advice on choice of courses, universities and the personal statement.
- Oxbridge, Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Science, Engineering and Law: candidates for these particularly competitive courses are identified early on (often in the first term of the Lower Sixth) and a special programme of preparation is put in place for them.
- The Careers and Higher Education programme also includes advice and information on Gap year opportunities and on applications to universities in the US and elsewhere in the Europe for those who are interested in exploring these options. A preparation course for SATS is also offered for those who wish to apply to American universities.

### **Students who are not aiming for Higher Education**

Not all of our students will choose to go on to higher education: each year a number will choose a more vocational direction, and we aim to support these students in their process of exploring options and making decisions just as much as we do those who are making applications to higher education. Indeed the aim is to encourage all our students to consider a broad range of options and to make informed decisions that will help them to fulfil their potential and to capitalise on their particular talents and interests.

Those of our students who elect to pursue a more vocational path immediately after A levels are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the Futurewise career guidance programme mentioned above. This can be enormously valuable in helping participants to focus on their particular strengths and aptitudes and to identify how these relate to the world of work and to specific careers and vocational directions.

The Careers Evening which takes place in the spring term usually includes information sessions on alternatives to university, and the parents who participate in the event are usually very happy to advise on direct entry into their professional areas where this is possible and appropriate. We are usually also able to put students in touch with appropriate organisations and / or with former students with experience in a relevant field for additional guidance.

## **The International Section**

As for most students who join the International Section this is their first experience of life and study in the UK, the one- or two-year IGCSE programmes and Study Abroad term courses were created with the aim of providing:

- A strong academic core curriculum which will allow our students to improve their English, develop a range of academic, communication and independent study skills, as well as gain nationally and internationally recognised qualifications so that they may progress successfully on to the next step in their education whether in the UK or in their own country.
- A strong framework for personal development, underpinned by caring pastoral support and a wide-ranging extra-curricular programme, which encourages the students to extend their learning beyond the classroom and to develop life skills such as personal responsibility, team-working and creativity. This strand comprises the taught curriculum of sport, Personal Development and Study Skills as well as the Extended Curriculum of extra-curricular activities and excursions.
- A supportive and respectful learning environment, which welcomes diversity and recognises the contributions of every individual. This involves providing culturally inclusive teaching and learning so that the transition from one educational system to another is supported and the students become skilled and informed future participants in the global economy.

## **The Taught Curriculum**

### **Year 10i/Study Abroad Programme**

Our Year 10i/Term abroad course is designed for students, generally aged 14 – 15, who arrive with an elementary to intermediate level of English language knowledge (A2 – B1 on the Common European Framework).

Some students on this course will progress onto our one-year intensive IGCSE course in their second year of study; others join the programme for a shorter period in order to gain a taste of study in a UK independent school.

The students follow a study programme which consists of the following:

- Intensive general and academic English
- Maths
- Science (combined Biology, Chemistry, Physics)
- Introduction to Humanities & Social Sciences
- Excelsis Award
- Modern Foreign Language (French or German)
- Music and Drama
- Fine Art
- PD (Personal Development – also known as Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education)

As well as regular progress tests of a summative nature, the Year 10i/Study Abroad students are continually assessed on a range of skills which include:

- The ability to work collaboratively with their peers through project-based assignments and team work activities.
- Written communication skills through conducting and writing up mini-research projects together.
- Oral communication skills through taking part in debates, role-play activities and making presentations as well as leading assembly.
- Study skills, including organisation, time management and working to deadlines.

By the end of their specially adapted Year 10i programme, students will have had the opportunity to develop greater knowledge and understanding of the subjects they wish to pursue in greater depth and are well equipped to embark on the more challenging and intensive one-year IGCSE programme. Students completing the full year will take the Trinity Integrated Skills in English exam and gain an Excelsis Award (Honours).

Study Abroad students who return home after only one term leave with a better understanding of British culture, society and values as well as a certificate of studies which can be used to co-validate the course content against the educational qualifications of their own country.

### **Year 11i (one-year IGCSE programme)**

Our one-year IGCSE course is designed for students, generally 15-16 years of age, who arrive with a low to upper intermediate level of English language knowledge (B1-B2 on the Common European Framework).

Some students on this course will progress into our own Sixth Form while others aim to gain a place in another UK independent school either to study A level or the IB.

The intensive one-year IGCSE programme contains a core component:

- IGCSE English as a Second Language
- IGCSE Maths
- IGCSE Sciences: 1, 2 or 3 IGCSE Single Sciences: Chemistry, Physics, Biology or IGCSE Dual Award Science
- IGCSE Mother-tongue (where available)
- IGCSE Global Citizenship

IGCSEs have been chosen specifically because they have a distinct international element and are particularly suited to our students. They allow teaching to be placed in an international context and are more relevant to our diverse student body.

IGCSE Global Citizenship allows us to recognise our students' own backgrounds, the knowledge they bring of diverse political, social and cultural forms of organisation and to share this in class. As such, the subject allows us to explore differences, and potential areas of conflict, in a supportive classroom environment which promotes debate and encourages the development of core British values of tolerance, mutual respect and understanding.

Our timetable structure and careful planning of each student's study programme allows maximum flexibility so that our students are able to complete a combination of subjects most suited to their needs, interests and long-term goals. Each subject typically has 4 hours 40 minutes per week, apart from English which has 5 hours 15 minutes of contact time and Global Citizenship which has 3 hours 30 minutes. This allows all teachers to enrich the delivery of their subject, extending learning beyond the classroom and providing time to taking part in challenges and competitions, such as the National Physics Challenge, the Mathematics Olympiad and events such as Poetry Live.

### **Choice of subjects**

Our aim is for all our one-year IGCSE students to complete their programme of study typically with at least 7 IGCSE, although some may achieve up to 8 or more. Students will be advised on the basis of testing and detailed discussion of their needs and interests on additional IGCSE choices from the following options:

- Fine Art
- Business Studies
- English Literature
- French
- Geography
- German
- History

The subjects offered as options have been selected on the basis that they:

- a. Broaden the curriculum, extending the challenge offered in the English + Maths + sciences core thus ensuring all students are being stretched linguistically, creatively and academically;
- b. Give the students access to a wide range of subjects at A level. For example History and Geography are both a good stepping-stone not only into their own subjects but a range of others including, Politics, Sociology and Psychology where essay writing skills are essential. Art prepares students for continuing with Fine Art or Photography at A level or can be used to stimulate interest in History of Art;
- c. Are achievable within a one-year period.

### **Providing for academically able and talented students**

We aim to stretch all our students and to encourage them in developing their potential. We are able to provide greater challenge to our most able and talented students in a number of ways.

- The most able mathematicians will complete IGCSE Maths in the November sitting and then go on to complete IGCSE Further Maths in June.
- The most linguistically able students will complete both IGCSE English as a Second Language and the IGCSE English First Language.
- The Excelsis Award is offered to the most talented or able students with a particular set of extra-curricular and academic interests. The Award encourages independent organisation,

recording of skills acquired and includes challenges aimed at students who are Gifted, Talented and Outstanding in a particular field from an academic area of study to sport or artistic talents.

### **Life in the UK / PD (or PSHEE)**

As well as sending out a pre-arrival Welcome Pack to prepare the students for what to expect when they make the move to living in the UK, the International Section provides a one-week induction course on arrival. This is aimed at giving our students practical support in relation to their new environment.

Throughout the year the students have an on-going PD strand where we can expand upon this theme of adapting to life in the UK. The course covers coping with culture shock, travelling safely around the city, personal safety, care of possessions and valuables, healthcare in the UK, sexual health and relationships, drugs and alcohol, economic education and British law. The course is run in a relaxed fashion with students working together with their Form Tutors. The content is presented through discussions and activities and role play so that potentially culturally difficult topics may be addressed in a sensitive fashion.

### **Study Skills & Examination Preparation**

Throughout the year, the Form Tutors help support the development of study skills in Registration sessions by checking students' Planners weekly to ensure they are completing their homework and helping their Form Group members with general planning and organisation. In PD sessions and Assembly time, Form Tutors discuss styles of learning, study strategies and organisation. They will help students to identify specific strengths and weaknesses, set goals and plan how to get there, enabling our students to make the most of their academic talents. Throughout this element of the course we are also delivering a Pre-IB component which seeks to link Theory of Knowledge to critical thinking and study skills

At key times – preparing for tests, mocks and exams, the Form Tutor team will also cover skills such as, memorisation techniques and managing stress. As a close source of support to their students, the Form Tutor will report back any pastoral concerns that may emerge from these conversations to the Deputy Head (Pastoral), David Wareham. This information may then be shared with other members of staff, so that each student has a net-work of adults providing attention to their well-being. In the final term, Tuesday and Thursday afternoons are given over to supervised revision and testing sessions for the Year 11i students to help refine their exam skills.

Students with particular difficulties in personal organisation or independent study are given tailored support in additional sessions. The sessions are generally in a small group, either run in school lunch time or after school.

### **Onward placement and Next Steps**

Throughout the course, we work intensively to get to know our students better and understand their aims and interests in order to provide expert advice on the next stage of their studies. Year 10i, 11i and Study Abroad students are encouraged to attend Open Mornings and information events both at d'Overbroeck's and other local independent schools. They are given support in exploring the full range of next steps available, including how to co-validate their studies if they are with us for a short period only. Over each term a number of assemblies run by Sixth Form heads of department help

students develop a sense of how subjects which are new to them might relate to the world of work and to specific careers or vocations. They will also be helped to write personal statements, complete application forms and improve their interview technique, so that whatever the next stage of their education, our students are knowledgeable about the options open to them and confident enough to be able to capitalise on their talents and interests.

### **Sport and Activities**

Year 10i students at the International Section take part in the Sport/Activities programme available on Tuesday afternoons with the lower school students. Year 11i students take part alongside Sixth Formers on Thursday mornings. We see this as a crucial part of their physical, intellectual and social development. The aim is to encourage participation and skills development through enjoyment and team-working. Students may choose from a wide variety of sports, offering opportunities for socialisation with both British and other international students. We also run occasional sporting events in conjunction with other schools which are fellow members of BAISIS (the British Association of Independent Schools with International Students). After-school activities such as school production, vocal group and orchestra are open to all students across the school and are a great way of encouraging our international students to feel part of the wider school community.

### **The Extended Curriculum**

The aim of the extended curriculum is to encourage our students to extend their learning beyond the classroom, to explore personal interests and discover new talents. On Thursday afternoons, students take part in a wide variety of activities, ranging from special interest activities such as Debating Club, Young Enterprise and Music Tech Club, run for the Sixth Form and the International Section, or Cookery Club and Discover Oxford, specifically run for our students, through to whole International Section activities such as the Christmas pantomime or the annual International Arts Festival.

We also offer regular evening and weekend activities aimed at opening up new experiences to our students. These include school-based workshops (drama, music and dance, for example) and visits to places of interest in Oxford and beyond, challenging physical activities such as orienteering and 'outward-bound' sports, and purely social events such as cinema trips. These activities all offer opportunities for our students to reinforce their language learning and communicative skills whilst having fun, and as such are a vital part of the overall curriculum.

Our International Section students also take part in the House system alongside the students in Years 7-11, providing opportunities for integration and participation in a wide range of joint activities of a sporting, artistic and charitable nature. Year 11i students are able to stand for the position of House Captain and Vice-House Captain, giving them a position of responsibility within the International Section community. Beyond this, we are introducing membership of a student council, to be made up of the House captains and vice-captains, representatives from the student body to provide input on food and catering, sports and leisure and library and learning environment. This will be put into action in the course of 2017-18

## **APPENDIX**

**The following are protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010:**

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation.

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