Sixth Form Curriculum

Below is a summary of areas covered during students’ time in Sixth Form. Generally students are selected to follow an Entry 3 pathway or a Level 1 pathway, and most subjects offer qualifications at both these levels.

* English and Maths

Students will study either Functional Skills or GCSE depending on ability and pathways chosen for them. Please see relevant curriculum areas for more details

* Communication skills

Sixth form communication skills groups are led by our in house Speech and Language Therapists and are aimed at developing strategies to enhance communication in social and workplace settings. Sessions focus particularly on developing functional skills such as body language, listening, assertiveness and formulating opinions and more advanced skills such as how to apply communication skills to potentially difficult social contexts e.g. resolving conflict. These sessions provide opportunities to practise skills through group discussion and role play; building student’s confidence in their ability to communicate and form new friendships in college and workplace settings.

* Work placements

We aim to offer regular supported work placements for all students in the Sixth form at organisations either local to us or their homes if they are able to travel to them. The aim is that by working on site once a week for the best part of a year, students will gain invaluable experience regarding the roles and responsibilities that come with being an employee in an organisation over time. The hope in many cases is that this experience can lead to employment or Apprenticeships where available.

* Life skills day

This recently introduced day is aimed at enabling students to gain the skills needed to plan trips and visits and travel independently. Time is taken familiarising students with local public transport by supporting them on journeys, before a series of assessments can be made in order for them to be judged independent travellers. A great emphasis is also placed on the planning and budgeting needed to make such trips, so that students will eventually be able to organise every aspect of their day.

* Buckinghamshire College group experience

Students get the opportunity to study different units at college during Year 13, including Art & Design and Motor Vehicle Maintenance. This takes place at different campuses, with transport provided by the school. The aim is to familiarise students with the college environment, which can act as part of a transition to college life for those students wishing to make it their next step.

* Alfriston collaboration

In order to create positive, supported social interaction experiences, Sixth formers are able to share some lessons with students from Alfriston school. This takes place on both school sites, with transport provided, and with students being given as many subject options as possible to choose from, many of which can contribute towards courses followed below.

* Princes Trust

Recently SDS has adopted the ‘Achieve’ programme run by the Prince’s Trust. The qualifications they receive in Personal Development and Employability Skills recognise a breadth of personal skills, qualities and attitudes required by employers across a range of sectors. They have been developed with the aim of progressing candidates into further education and/or employment. It offers a flexible model of delivery with choices of units within six modular areas:

Skills for school

Personal, social development

Life Skills

Active Citizenship

Enterprise and Entrepreneurship

Preparation for work

* BTECs

A range of BTEC courses are offered to students including Vocational Studies and Workskills, with the aim of improving employability. Units include Animal care, Career Progression, Self –Assessment and Volunteering. Many such units have a practical bias that suits the students; work is assessed through completion of workbooks, presentations and observation records.

* Enrichment programme

Activities on a Friday afternoon are mainly student led according to their interests, with the aim of encouraging positive decision making and teamwork. We are always open to suggestions from students, and try to provide for everyone’s preferences. The range of activities and events that have so far taken place include music concerts, clay pigeon shooting, upcycling, newsletter production, map reading, fishing, fitness and outward bound tasks.

  