

Curriculum statement SWHS



SOUTH WIRRAL HIGH SCHOOL

Where Every Student Matters & Every Student Thrives

Curriculum Intent

South Wirral High School's curriculum is fully aligned with the TCAT vision and values, ensuring our students receive a high-quality education that reflects the Trust's commitment to collaboration, challenge, and continuous professional development. We emphasize collaboration and interdependence in our learning environment, encouraging students to work together and support each other. This is not only built into our principle of teaching and the 'we do' element of lessons, but also built within our vision of how all stakeholders should work in the school, mirroring TCAT's core principle of collective accountability across its schools. Our approach to challenge and service is designed to push students to achieve their best while contributing positively to their communities, reflecting TCAT's commitment to high standards and continuous improvement. Whilst focusing on our vision to create Successful Learners, Confident, inspired individuals and active responsible citizens

In line with TCAT's focus on sustainability and wellbeing, our curriculum prioritizes the mental and physical health of students, fostering resilience and promoting sustainable practices in all areas of school life. Our Personal Development programme and PSHCE curriculum fosters the whole child, embraces and celebrates difference, and encourages diversity and inclusivity. We ensure every student's unique background and perspective is valued. Our commitment to educational excellence is evident through rigorous academic challenges that prepare students for success and equip them with the skills to excel, in alignment with TCAT's drive for high standards and pupil outcomes. Our curriculum is built on ensuring students can obtain a breadth of knowledge, through an approach of academic rigour to ensure that they become the best versions of themselves.

We place a strong emphasis on inclusivity and social justice, ensuring all students, particularly vulnerable and disadvantaged young people, have the support they need to thrive. This aligns with TCAT's strategic objectives, particularly around the engagement of vulnerable students, and our dedication to ensuring equal opportunities for all learners. Through our curriculum and ethos, we strive to uphold TCAT's values, fostering an environment where students, staff, and the broader community grow together and achieve their highest potential. Our Mission to work in partnership with families and communities so that every child matters and thrives aligns well with the Values that TCAT hold as important

Curriculum Aims

At South Wirral High School we want our students to be successful learners, confident inspired individuals and aspiring responsible citizens. As a school with a unique context within a selective authority, we recognise that success may look different to each student and so our focus is on students becoming the best versions of themselves so that they can go on to be active and successful citizens in society.

Our curriculum maps

To develop successful learners our curriculum allows the knowledge to build from its foundations at Key Stage two and progress through Key Stages three and four. Always building new knowledge on previous knowledge so reducing the demand on the short-term memory and avoiding cognitive overload. Our curriculum maps are designed around big questions, these are the composites of our curriculum, the key knowledge- the components are made explicit in schemes of work and allow teachers to make authentic links both within their own faculty and across subjects. The curriculum has literacy at its heart and Schemes of work make key subject specific vocabulary explicit and reference challenging reading.

Tier two and three words whose etymology is regularly discussed is highlighted throughout. As a result of the curriculum vision for aspiring responsible citizens. The message woven through the curriculum is seen in our PSHCE work, our School Values, where students develop skills and empathy through kindness, determination, resilience, independence and ambition, and the and the GCAT challenge initiative, whereby students are encouraged to be ambitious beyond the classroom.

Structure

We operate through a two-week timetable at KS3 and 4. At the end of year 9 student are given a choice of which level 2 course they would like to study, this is a guided options process, but we do not have specific pathways, all students are eligible for all courses we offer. Students choose four option choices in addition to the compulsory elements of English, Maths and Science. In addition to examined subjects, students access a curriculum of RPSHCE, and core PE at KS4 as well as PSHCE through allocated extended form times and drop-down days and experiences.

Subjects Offered

At KS3 students study English, Maths, Science, History, Geography, Sociology, French, Faith and Philosophy, Art, Music, Drama, PE, Design Technology, Food Technology, Computing, and PSHCE.

At KS4 all students study English and Maths and either combined Science or separate Science, PE, and RPSHCE, they then select an additional four subjects choosing from Enterprise (Business studies), Hospitality and catering, Health and social care, Film studies, French, History, Geography, Faith and Philosophy, Sociology, Art, Drama, Music, Dance, Sports, Computer Science, Digital Information Technology, Travel and tourism Design Technology, Textiles and Construction and the Built Environment.

Teaching Methods

All lessons in all subjects are delivered through the South Wirral Way, our house style of curriculum implementation

1. Routine Practice Recall – retrieval questions
2. I do- explanations of new knowledge
3. We do -modelling and worked examples
4. You do- independent tasks which are challenging
5. Explicit teaching of vocabulary

Each lesson is planned and resourced to ensure it is accessible to all learners, adapted so that everyone can access the same ambitious curriculum and understanding is checked effectively.

Assessment

Our assessments follow the following principles:

- Ensure all students can access the assessment
 - All students do the same assessment task
 - Only assess knowledge that has been taught
- Only assess knowledge once (within each assessment)
- Samples component knowledge as well as assessing the composite
- Have a razor-sharp focus on the most powerful knowledge - as defined on Knowledge Organisers
 - Assess the accumulation of knowledge as the student progresses through KS3
 - Identify gaps in knowledge for students
- Identify useful information for teachers to clarify, explain and re-teach and subject leaders to evaluate curriculum (intent and) implementation

At KS3 students have 2 summative assessment points for all subjects. At this time, they receive an attitude to class learning grade from 1-5 with 5 as the highest, an attitude to home learning grade and a % grade for their overall assessment. Reporting of assessment to parents includes the average Year group assessment % for comparison to their child's grade

At KS4 we look to introduce authentic examination experiences as part of assessment. In the Summer of Year 10, students will sit a suite of GCSE style examination papers which will be marked and moderated in line with grade boundaries. In Year 11 students will sit Pre Public Exams (PPEs) at two points in the Year (December and March) At this stage these exams will be full exam papers

Year 10 and 11 also have two summative assessment points.

Student Outcomes

As a non selective school in a selective authority, we are aware that attainment of students as a whole may look different to the attainment of other schools. This does not mean we lack challenge or aspiration for students, but work on emphasising every child's individual learning journey. Our target setting is based on FFT 20 models, reflecting appropriate ambition.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The school sets a strategic quality assurance calendar at the start of every year so that there is a consistent and thorough review of curriculum intent and implementation. This quality assurance included Faculty leader curriculum conversations, learning walks, book reviews, student voice, review of assessments and staff voice.

Throughout quality assurance activities the school ensures that school priorities around disadvantaged students, SEND students and a literacy focus is included in all activities.

In addition to calendared activities, the school was a member of Challenge Partners and had a three day full school review which took place annually by an experienced inspector and accompanying school leaders. More recently, we have led on a Middle Leader Review Model and been the first school to complete a subject specific review day (History) with our Assistant Headteacher for T&L leading on the implementation of this model.

Continuous Improvement

Our mantra for curriculum improvement is that it is 'lived not laminated' and so despite the significant amount of time the school allocated to the development of curriculum intent and implementation, we have built in regular times to review the curriculum and ensure that time is allocated to tweaks and changes needed/

This is embedded as a constant cycle of review and development through enhanced results and data analysis in September of each year through to the allocation of gained time to work on changes in the summer term

External and Internal Quality Assurance throughout the year supports leaders in reviewing continuous areas for improvement, and school improvement priorities are established each year with strategic action planning implemented based on each priority

Broad and Balanced

We are committed to providing a broad and balanced curriculum that ensures all students have access to a wide range of subjects, knowledge, and skills, meeting national requirements while fostering personal growth.

We do not narrow the curriculum at any stage. In Key Stage 3 (KS3), we avoid subject carousel models, ensuring students experience a full range of subjects, developing essential skills and knowledge. In Key Stage 4 (KS4), we offer a variety of GCSE options, allowing students to choose subjects that align with their interests and aspirations while maintaining a broad education. We provide guidance on choices, but students make the final decisions, empowering them to pursue their strengths and ambitions.

We ensure that students receive their statutory offer in line with the national curriculum, including English, mathematics, science, humanities, arts, physical education, and languages.

We regularly review the links between subjects across the curriculum, enhancing students' ability to make connections and deepening their understanding. Our curriculum is quality assured at all stages to prevent unnecessary repetition, ensuring that learning is coherent and progressive across year groups.

By offering a variety of subjects, empowering student choice, and providing enrichment opportunities, South Wirral High School ensures that every student receives a holistic education, equipping them with the knowledge, skills, and attributes they need to succeed.

Digital Literacy

All subjects look to ensure students are equipped with the necessary skills to thrive in the digital world. We recognise that digital literacy is essential not only in computer science but across all subject areas. At KS3 we ensure computing follows all national curriculum requirements, teachers embed digital skills into lessons in all subjects, enabling students to use technology effectively for research, collaboration, and communication. At the start of Year 7, all students are inducted into using Google classroom and Google drive tools for them to have a strong base understanding of the school's systems and software.

In subjects like English, students use digital tools for presentations, research, and multimedia projects, enhancing their understanding of content. Across a broad range of subjects, we use IT software for accessing resources and materials, as well as completing tasks such as homework. This includes Seneca, GCSE Pod, Sparx Maths and Google Classroom to name a few resources. We also promote digital safety, ensuring students understand the importance of responsible online behaviour via our PSHCE programme and assembly calendar.

Additionally, in Key Stage 3 and 4, students are taught specific digital skills, such as coding, data management, and digital design. This holistic approach ensures that students are not only consumers of technology but also capable creators and critical thinkers in the digital landscape.

At KS4 we have introduced Digital Information Technology in addition to our Computer Science qualification to broaden the offer we can provide to students

Global Competencies

The curriculum at South Wirral has been developed to ensure that students have opportunity to think critically, solve problems and apply knowledge in real world situations. Our broad curriculum promotes creativity collaboration and communications.

Our PSHCE, CEIAG and form time curriculum promotes social and emotional competencies through reviewing students' self-awareness and developing their empathetic nature. Example of this include students' interaction with the Lyfta programme, their engagement with 'The Day', and the promotion of effective communication habits via the Oracy Scholars programme.

Lyfta also plays a big part in the school's development of Cultural awareness and intercultural competences as well as our SMSC audit into ensuring that all subject curriculum has an inclusive and principled approach and provides representation for minority groups.

Students are encouraged to develop an understanding of global issues such as climate change, social justice, and equity through our PSHCE curriculum and other subject areas such as Science, History, English, Geography and Sociology. They are taught to make decisions that consider long-term social, environmental, and economic impacts.

Character Education

We aim to inspire confident, independent, and ambitious students who excel academically and as active community members. By instilling values of kindness, determination, respect, independence, and ambition, we equip students with the tools for success in all aspects of life. This ethos is reflected in our curriculum and extra-curricular programme. Through our School Values and the TCAT challenge initiative, we help students grow as leaders, thinkers, and communicators while building character. These initiatives encourage participation in enrichment activities where students take on leadership roles, organise events, show resilience, and demonstrate independence and ambition; pushing them to reach their full potential. Students aim to complete elements of the TCAT challenge, led by a dedicated member of staff, and allows them to develop into well-rounded, compassionate individuals who lead with kindness and pursue their ambitions with determination. Personal and form-based rewards promote teamwork and collective success. Tutors track progress during weekly sessions, with achievements logged in Arbor and celebrated at Year group assemblies. Progress is documented through our Personal Development passports, showcasing their development throughout their school years, and aligning the programme more with their personal experiences.

Enrichment Opportunities

Whether raising money for the Kenya school development project, working with Claire House Children's Hospice or entertaining elderly residents with performances, students are encouraged to 'give back' to their community through our School Values, Character Development, and TCAT challenge.

We have a broad extracurricular offer that include significant lunch time and after school clubs. We track and monitor engagement in these programmes and ensure that specific groups are targeted around engagement. Our offer includes a broad range of sports, teams, qualifications, mental agility activities and experiences. This includes Diversity club, chess, debating, glow in the dark sports, tabletop gaming club to name a few.

We are running several trips including Barcelona and Uganda in 2026 and students get to engage in a significant number of performance related shows and experiences as both an audience and as a performer.

We run regular Drama residentials, have run an Art residential in June 2025 at Tyn-Y Felin and have established Ski trips and a Year 11 prom.

All year 10 students engage in a two-week work experience Programme, and we buy in independent careers advice for students. Our Careers Fair is attended by every student in the school, and they get to talk with a wide range of colleges, sixth forms, apprenticeships, Universities and employers.

Support for Students

Student support includes the following:

Transition-There is a full programme of transition for all Year 6 students coming into year 7. This includes enrichment activities, enhanced transition for SEND students, transition days and evenings, primary visits, a summer school and allocated welcome days

SEND-The school has developed an in-house learning hub (Not a resource provision) which supports the learning and development of SEND students. The school has a high number of SEND students and so we have developed an appropriate programme of support in line with students needs

Pastoral Support-Every Year group has a Head of Year (teaching) and Assistant Head of Year (Non-Teaching) who support all students pastoral care and well being and support a team of tutors. All tutors have a fully developed form time curriculum ran for 20 minutes every day to support students in their broad development. The school employs student welfare officers who in their dual roles around safeguarding and attendance support students who find themselves with personal challenges.

Interventions-Beyond quality first teaching, the school provides a full schedule of revision and intervention for Year 11 students leading up to examinations throughout Year 11. From Year 7, any students with reading ages unable to access secondary curriculum are provided with a programme of intervention with strong outcomes around ensuring students reading enables them to access learning