

Newcastle upon Tyne Royal Grammar School

Curriculum policy

This policy applies to the whole school and is published to parents, students and staff



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Aims

The curriculum at the Royal Grammar School Newcastle (RGS) is designed to provide all students with a broad and balanced curriculum which offers appropriate intellectual stretch and challenge in the context of a selective academic day school. The School has, as its desired outcome, the intention that all students are as best prepared as they can be for the next stage in their education and for opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. There is equal access for all to linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative areas. All subjects encourage the students' development of speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills. The syllabus in each subject is designed to offer continuity and progression of learning. RGS is known as a very high-achieving school in terms of exam results, but does not allow itself to be tied slavishly to exam syllabuses. On the contrary, the work undertaken in particular subjects often goes well beyond what is strictly required of students in public examinations. We want to ensure that our students are gripped by a fascination with the subject and take their studies further out of interest, not in order merely to get a particular examination grade.

We have long believed in the vital importance of our extra-curricular life, an aspect that does not merely complement but actually strengthens the academic side. Our Junior School, GCSE and A level results demonstrate every year that those who achieve highly in the classroom and examination hall are those who have been fully engaged in sport, the arts and all the other aspects of the School's incomparably rich life outside the classroom.

Students with Special Learning Needs

Students with Special Learning Needs and EHC plans are catered for within the Learning Support department. Details of this provision are available within the [SEN policy](#).

Flexibility and individual learning

RGS works hard to ensure that programmes of study and schemes of work are suited to all its students and takes into account the age, aptitude and needs of all and a respect for the fundamental British values of democracy, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Differentiation and appropriate variation in teaching ensures that there is access and opportunity for all students to learn and make progress. The School is currently increasing its emphasis on the process of learning, helping students to consciously develop study skills and to understand how they learn.

Progression

As students progress through the school there are increasing opportunities for them to follow their own interests, and a careful balance is struck between and allowing students' choice ensuring balance. At Sixth Form level, students have the freedom to specialise, though even then, the school does its best to ensure that broader learning and development of personal skills continue. The School has an exceptionally wide range of extra-curricular activities which both complement the skills and knowledge learned in the classroom and help to develop wider interests.

PSHE, Philosophy and Religion

PSHE or Personal, Social, Health and Economic education is designed to ensure that alongside Philosophy and Religion (P&R) all students at the RGS develop the skills and knowledge necessary to manage their lives. It is delivered along with SRE (Sex and Relationship Education) to support and guide our students' physical, moral and emotional wellbeing and development. These are key to students' health and happiness and for learning to be both enjoyable and productive. Full details are provided in the separate [PSHE policy](#) and schemes of work.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students

Within the PSHE and P&R programmes students are encouraged to develop a fuller appreciation of themselves and their impact on, and interactions with the communities in which they live and work. Within this they are encouraged to think about their own behaviour, their moral compass, and how they live a tolerant and respectful life.

This is, of course, reflected in the ethos of the RGS which actively seeks to imbue students with values of respect, tolerance and personal responsibility.

Full details are provided in the separate [PSHE policy](#) and [Philosophy and Religion policy](#).

Careers Guidance

Our vision is to ensure that each student will develop the skills and confidence to make the most of their life choices and follow the career path which suits them best.

In pursuit of this our students should:

- Have developed the appropriate skills to become effective career decision makers and to fulfil their potential
- Know themselves and how their strengths, weaknesses and interests relate to the world of work
- Have a clear understanding of the impact of their education, training and employment choices
- Make career choices, which are informed and well thought through and are based on impartial advice, self-awareness, understanding of the relevance of their education, skills and experience and awareness of the opportunities and pathways available

- Be lifelong learners and will be motivated to pursue continuous professional development to achieve their own potential, to become effective employees and to make a valuable contribution to the economy
- Have access to fit-for-purpose facilities in school, suitably resourced to provide access to relevant information, up-to-date assessment tools and professional, impartial guidance and support as required
- Have the use of technology to support access to relevant information, advice and guidance.

Full details are available in the [Careers guidance policy](#) and handbook.

Subjects offered

This is a broad outline, and some details may change from year to year.

In the Junior School, students learn:

- Art
- Design & Technology
- Drama
- English
- French
- Games
- Geography
- History
- ICT
- Maths
- Music
- PE
- PSHE
- RE
- Science
- Swimming

In the Senior School, in their first three years (Years 7-9) students learn:

- Art
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Engineering, Design & Technology*
- Drama*
- English
- French[†]
- Games
- Geography
- German[†]
- History
- Latin*
- Maths
- Music*
- PSHE
- Philosophy and Religion
- PE/swimming
- Physics
- Spanish[±]

† In Year 7 students study both French and German.

* In Year 9 students choose a combination from these subjects plus Classical Greek, Spanish, and Ancient History.

± Spanish is taught in Year 8 in addition to a core language of either French or German.

NB Engineering, Design & Technology in Years 7 and 8 includes basic computer programming and coding language skills.

For **GCSE** in Years 10 and 11, students study English Language and Literature, Maths, Biology, Chemistry, Physics and a modern foreign language (French, Spanish or German according to demand) plus any three or four from:

- Art
- Ancient History
- Engineering, Design & Technology
- Drama
- Economics
- Geography
- German
- Classical Greek
- History
- Latin
- Music
- Spanish

For the Sixth Form curriculum, please see the **Sixth Form Guide** (available on request).