

# Skinner's School

## Curricular Policies

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## **1. What is our curriculum for?**

- 1.1 If we are to establish a coherent and effective set of curricular policies, we must establish the set of values which underpin those policies. Such values will always influence decisions, whether they are made explicit or whether they remain implicit. There are curricular goals which we believe will meet a pupil's current needs, and his likely future. The goals which we hope to achieve through the curriculum at Skinners' School are as follows:
- 1.2 We want pupils at Skinners' School to become creative, independent learners. We wish their learning to be effective in solving problems and unravelling complex arguments, rather than simple recall, or rote learning. In short, learning should be synoptic across topics and subjects, and directed towards use.
- 1.3 Learning should be useful to a young person in giving them a framework of thinking to guide them through life. That framework should broadly consist of a world-view shaped by the values of the Enlightenment and the Renaissance. Broadly speaking, this means that the boys will earn not only qualifications, but a respect for scholarship and learning as things worthwhile in themselves. We intend that they will also develop an appreciation of human achievement in art, music, science and literature. They will develop the ability to think critically, to respect evidence, to distinguish between opinions and prejudices and to make balanced judgements of their own. In addition, other sets of knowledge are needed. Education in political and economic awareness, information technology, health and the environment are all essential and should be reflected in our curriculum.
- 1.4 We wish the pupils to understand and apply a set of principles and values through the education they receive at Skinners' School. Respect for fairness, honesty, tolerance of others and of difference, and above all a sense of duty to help others are core values that should emerge from all aspects of the curriculum.
- 1.5 We wish to give every pupil the capacity to enter and thrive in the world of work which awaits them. Entrepreneurial and enterprise skills should be fostered. Excellent Careers and Higher Education advice will also be essential.
- 1.5.1 Finally, the education we provide at Skinners' School should equip the pupil with a sense of wonder, a desire to learn more, and the capacity to do so over the course of the rest of his life. In short, we wish to create effective life-long learners.

## 2. What is a Good Teacher?

- 2.1 Alexander Pope offers his definition of a perfect critic in his “Essay on Criticism” in 1709. Some would say the definition also covers teachers, and that not much has changed since:

“But where’s the man that counsel can bestow,  
Still pleased to teach, and yet not proud to know?  
Unbiased, or by favour or by spite,  
Not dully prepossessed, not blindly right.  
Though learned, well-bred; and though well-bred, sincere;  
Modestly bold, and humanly severe  
Who to a friend his faults can freely show,  
And gladly praise the merit of a foe?  
Blessed with a taste exact, yet unconfined;  
A knowledge both of books and humankind,  
Generous converse; a soul exempt from pride;  
And love to praise, with reason on his side?”

- 2.2 The relationship between a teacher and each pupil is central to that teacher’s success in directing learning. Pope is right to focus upon personal qualities, as teachers must use them as a tool in their work. Pope focuses upon the breadth of mind a good teacher must have. To that, we should add four other necessities: engagement with the pupils; an enjoyment of the company of the pupils; a passion for the act of teaching; and a passion for the subject taught.

- 2.3 Rather more dryly, and in the mode of modern research, **the 2000 report by Hay McBer into teacher effectiveness** found that three elements lead to pupils’ progress. These elements are: **Professional Characteristics**, **Teaching Skills** and an appropriate **Classroom Climate**.

- 2.4 The Professional Characteristics are:

- Professionalism (challenge and support, confidence, creating trust, respect for others),
- Thinking (analytical thinking, conceptual thinking),
- Leading (flexibility, holding others to account, managing pupils, passion for learning),
- Relating to Others (impact and influence, team working, understanding others),
- Planning and Setting Expectations (drive for improvement, research, initiative)
- A valuable addition to this list would be the capacity for evaluation and reflection leading to self-improvement

- 2.5 The Teaching Skills are:

- High Expectations
- Planning
- Homework
- Assessment
- Methods and Strategies
- Time and Resource Management
- Pupil management/discipline
- Time on task

- Lesson flow
- I would add **Passion for teaching** and **Passion for the subject taught**.

2.6 The Classroom Climate is the experience of the pupils in being in the classroom with the teacher. The pupils look for the following:

- **Clarity** in the purpose of each lesson, and how the lesson relates to others and the broader aims of the school.
- **Order** within the classroom, where discipline, order and civilised behaviour are maintained.
- A clear set of **Standards** as to how pupils should behave and what each pupil should do and try to achieve, with a clear focus on higher rather than minimum standards.
- **Fairness**: the degree to which there is an absence of favouritism, and a consistent link between rewards in the classroom and actual performance.
- **Participation**: the opportunity for pupils to participate actively in the classroom by discussion, questioning, giving out materials, and other similar activities.
- **Support**: feeling emotionally supported in the classroom, so that pupils are willing to try new things and learn from mistakes.
- **Safety**: the degree to which the classroom is a safe place, where pupils are not at risk from emotional or physical bullying, or other fear-arousing factors.
- **Interest**: the feeling that the classroom is an interesting and exciting place to be, where pupils feel stimulated to learn.
- **Environment**: the feeling that the classroom is a comfortable, well-organised, clean and attractive physical environment.
- I would add **Enjoyment**.

*This section will be revised in the light of the DfES new standards for teachers when they are formally accepted.*

### 3. What is Good Teaching?

- 3.1 The School is not committed to one single approved teaching strategy. There is no rigidly defined ‘house style’. There is an expectation that a variety of methods – teacher exposition, pair work, group work and practical sessions among them – will be used as appropriate. There is also an expectation that individual teachers and departments will continually review the effectiveness of different teaching strategies. The School’s approach to teaching and learning is that there are well-established principles of effective teaching which need to be used in our day-to-day practice. **Notwithstanding these comments, use of AfL is expected to be a central part of every teachers’ approach.**
- 3.2 Lessons should have a **tripartite structure** – a beginning, a middle and an end – clearly discernible to pupils.
- 3.3 The introductory phase of the lesson is of particular importance. Three things need to be done. First, bear in mind that the teacher’s sense of continuity between lessons is likely to be stronger than the pupils’, the teacher should make clear the **links between the work to be done in the lesson and that done in previous lessons** – that is, the teacher should explain how the lesson about to take place sits within the series of lessons. Second, there needs to be explanation of the **intended learning objectives** of the lesson – what precisely it is the teacher intends the pupil(s) to learn as a result of proceedings over the next 60 minutes.

Please note that this is a more precise undertaking than simply stating ‘what we are going to do’.

Learning Objectives can be categorised into different types, and common stems can be used to share them with pupils, for example:

By the end of the lesson you will:

- **Know that...** (for knowledge: factual information, such as names of people or equipment, places, symbols, formulae etc);
- **Understand how/why...** (for understanding: concepts, reasons, effects, principles, processes etc);
- **Develop/ be able to...** (for skills: using knowledge, applying techniques, analysing information etc);
- **Develop/be aware of...** (for attitudes and values: empathy, caring, sensitivity towards social issues, feelings, moral issues etc);
- **Explore and refine strategies for...** (creating, designing, hypothesising, exploring alternatives)

**The learning objectives must be written on the board.** Third, some effort needs to be made to **motivate pupils** – to indicate to them why what they are about to learn is important or worthwhile.

**The learning outcome** is different from the **learning objective**. It will specify what is expected from the pupil as the result of a task within a lesson. It will explain the criteria for success. It can be achieved in a number of ways:

By using stems such as:

- What I am looking for is... (for you to be able to use different tints to produce a ...)
- What I expect from everyone is... (that you use the idea of energy to explain why..)
- To be successful you... (You will need to identify where words have different meanings and explain their effects).

By clarifying what is expected through the use of questioning:

- To produce a good... what do you think you need to do?
- How will you make sure that...?
- What do we already know that will help you...?
- What do we mean by creativity?

By looking at examples of pupils’ work and discussing which features meet the criteria and why.

- 3.4 **‘Starters’**. The concept of ‘starter’ activities was popularised by the Key Stage 3 National Strategy. They can be defined simply as activities designed to provide thought-provoking and engaging beginnings to lessons. They are part of the business of motivating pupils referred to above. **The School regards ‘starters’ as good practice. It expects them to be widely but not slavishly or mechanically used.** In some circumstances their use may be inappropriate. When they are used they should relate to the intended learning outcomes of the lesson. They could consist of something as straight forward as a single question awaiting pupils on the whiteboard as they enter the room.

Successful starters:

- Are planned as a discrete element of a lesson but will often contribute to the achievement of the lesson's objectives;
- Have a clear purpose.

Starter activities tend to be most effective when they:

- Engage all pupils;
- Establish pace;
- Provide challenge;
- Are fun.

### 3.5 **The main body of a lesson.**

Teacher exposition and pupil activities in lessons obviously need to relate to, and further, the intended learning outcomes laid down at the start of the lesson.

Teacher exposition should be **clearly structured**, expressed in language appropriate to the age and ability of those being taught and authoritative in terms of content.

It is expected that use will be made, as appropriate, of such means of supporting and reinforcing teacher exposition as the whiteboard, demonstrations, presentation software and information technology.

Where teacher exposition is intended as a lead-in to a piece of class work, homework or other activity, care should be taken to give pupils **clear instructions** so as to enable them to make proper preparations.

Where **concepts** which pupils find problematical feature in a lesson, their meaning should be patiently and systematically explored. Teachers need to be mindful of the importance of ensuring that concepts are both identified and clarified.

Where **transition** is being made within a lesson from one task or activity to another, it should be clearly signalled to pupils. Pupils should not be left in doubt at any stage of the lesson about what it is the teacher intends they should be doing (listening, reading, writing etc.)

The importance of **questions** as a means of assessing levels of pupil understanding needs to be borne in mind. Questions should relate to the intended learning outcomes of the lesson. For the most part, teacher questions should be addressed to named pupils, though it is recognised that there is a place for invitations to members of a class as a whole to volunteer answers. Teachers should avoid excessive use of 'closed' questions and should seek where possible to use 'open' questions which target higher-order thinking skills. Questioning strategies need to take account of the presence in classes of gifted, SEN or AEL pupils. Pupils' responses to questions should not simply be accepted but should, where appropriate, be used as a basis for further questions. A climate needs to be created within the classroom in which pupils do not feel at risk of being either slighted or embarrassed if they ask questions.

3.6 **‘Plenaries’** are the phase of the lesson in which the class recap or recall the key points of the learning in the lesson. They frequently take place at the end of a lesson, but can be successfully used at any point. The idea is to ensure that pupils end each part of the process of learning with a clear idea of what it is they have learnt. Plenaries can be used to:

- Draw together what has been learned, to highlight the most important rather than the most recent points
- Summarise key facts, ideas and vocabulary, and stress what needs to be remembered
- Generalise from examples generated earlier in the lesson
- Go through an exercise, question pupils and rectify any remaining misunderstandings
- Make links to other work and what the class will go on to do next
- Highlight not only what pupils learn but how they have learned
- Highlight the progress pupils have made and remind them about their personal targets.

Plenaries should be planned and should link to the learning objectives stated at the outset. Pupils themselves should be actively involved: plenaries tend to be ineffective if they consist simply of a recapitulation of key points by the teacher. Bear in mind too that OFSTED reports suggest that plenaries are often the weakest parts of lessons observed. There is an expectation that all lessons taught in the school will have a distinct concluding phase which serves one or more of the purposes indicated immediately above.

3.7 Every effort should be made to ensure that lessons are appropriately pitched in terms of: **pace**: not so brisk as to lose the children, but not so meandering that interest and impetus are lost.

Where **marked books or papers** are returned during a lesson, their return should be used as an opportunity for pupils to reflect and respond to their learning. The teacher could allow an AfL exercise, offer a teacher commentary which is applicable to the class as a whole, speak to individuals about specific points or even ask for a period of silent reflection as each pupil studies the comments the teacher has made..

## 4. What is Good Learning?

4.1 Walt Whitman, in “Song of Myself” offers a definition of learning:

“Have you reckoned a thousand acres much? Have you reckoned the earth much?  
Have you practis’d so long to learn to read?  
Have you felt so proud to get at the meaning of poems?

Stop this day and night with me and you shall possess the origin of all poems,  
You shall possess the good of the earth and sun (there are millions of suns left),  
You shall no longer take things at second or third hand, nor look through the eyes of  
the dead, nor feed on the spectres in books,  
You shall not look through my eyes either, nor take things from me,  
You shall listen to all sides and filter them from yourself.”

4.2 A discussion amongst teachers generated the following thoughts on learning. Our central message to pupils is “Thou shalt not have *no idea*”. The dictionary definition of learning is

“Knowledge gained through study”. This is not very helpful to us. We believe that a good learner has certain characteristics. They will have the confidence to experiment and take risks. They will have independence of thought, question the truth they are offered and push back boundaries. They will be creative in their thinking. They know the subject content, but are not satisfied with learning simply for the sake of content. They are self-aware and recognise the emotional involvement in learning. Finally, they must have the perseverance to grind through to a conclusion and the passion to celebrate it. This is as true of a school as it is of an individual learner.

4.3 As a School, we should follow the lead of OFSTED and recognise that our primary goal when we walk into a lesson is to ensure that “all pupils make a marked gain in learning”. Use of recap, recall and plenary sessions will be essential in demonstrating this.

4.4 We need a clear set of guidelines on supporting learning:

- Effective use of AfL will deliver effective learning.
- Every effort should be made to ensure that pupils are at each stage of the lesson **active** in some way and are not merely passive observers.
- Every effort should be made to ensure that pupils are fully **engaged** throughout the lesson.
- Evidence of **minor lapses of concentration** on the part of one or more pupil ought not to be glossed over or overlooked. If necessary the ordinary business of the lesson should be suspended so that these pupils can be brought to order.
- Pupils should not only be encouraged to ask questions but should on occasion be **provoked** into doing so.
- Proper interest should be taken by the teacher in contributions pupils make. How we respond to pupils will shape their own attitudes.
- Seeking to develop the pupils’ higher-order thinking skills is especially important, given that our pupils are drawn from the higher part of the ability range. Although there are differences between subjects from the point of view of what kinds of questions can be asked and assignments set, it is not acceptable in any subject for pupils to be fed a largely unrelieved diet of lower-order recall and comprehension questions.
- Subject teachers need to be mindful of the business of different **learning styles**. Research suggests that the majority of pupils learn most effectively from seeing things (so-called ‘visual’ learners) and are helped by diagrams, reading and writing things down. Others, however, prefer learning from hearing and listening (‘aural’ learners) or through practical activity (‘physical’ or ‘kinaesthetic’ learners). There should be discussion with pupils of different ways of learning and of learning preferences. Pupils can be advised that if they are ‘visual’ learners it makes sense to use revision techniques such as ‘mind maps’ and colour-coding information. If they are ‘aural’ learners, encourage them to make use of techniques such as repeating things out loud as they revise or making tapes of information. However, we do need to avoid giving the impression to pupils that they are only capable of learning in one way. Indeed, learning styles may change – even over the course of the day.

- No-one learns through one of these styles alone and no-one can afford completely to neglect the others. It needs to be emphasised too that motivation is essential: someone who is hard-working and motivated will learn more than someone who is not, regardless of what ‘learning style’ he uses.

## **5. What Makes a Good Leader?**

- 5.1 Leadership is a quality required at all levels of the School. Classroom teachers offer leadership to their pupils; KS3 co-ordinators and Heads of Department offer leadership to their teams; Heads of Year offer leadership to their Year team. Leadership is not something that can be left to Senior Management.
- 5.2 Students need to show leadership skills as well. A student in the Sixth Form will be offered a number of different ways to take a leadership role. Opportunities exist in the CCF, in the various clubs and activities, as a mentor, as a Form Tutor, as a subject prefect, as a school prefect, as a house captain, as a senior prefect, as Head or Deputy Head Boy, as a mentor to a pupil outside the school, as part of the Science Specialist team and a host of others.
- 5.3 Pupils in Yrs 7 – 11 have opportunities as members of the school council, captains of school and house teams, participants in sports tours and World Challenge and a host of others.
- 5.4 Of course, every pupil and student is also expected to take a lead in maintaining the school ethos and in leading their own learning.
- 5.5 Given the importance we attach to leadership, it is necessary to make an attempt to define the kind of leadership we look for in all of these instances. There are innumerable academic treatises on the subject, but the Leadership Group, in a discussion on the topic, attempted to bypass these and focus upon what we actually do and what we aspire to in leadership.
- 5.6 We believe the following characteristics and behaviours to constitute the kind of leadership that should be displayed in daily interactions at Skinners’ School:
  - 5.6.1 There is no one style of leadership that is preferred – we must be adaptable.
  - 5.6.2 All of our engagements with others should exemplify emotional intelligence.
  - 5.6.3 Leaders inspire others through their enthusiasm.
  - 5.6.4 Leaders involve others by listening to their opinions. If possible, a leader will arrange it so his or her team generates the ideas to go forward.
  - 5.6.5 Leaders never confuse leadership with management. Leadership is about pursuing improvement, chasing goals and shaping the future; management is about sustaining existing good practice, dealing with the day-to-day issues and getting through the day.
  - 5.6.6 The relationship between a leader and his/her team is defined by the following qualities: mutual trust, respect for another’s judgement, leadership by example, mutual

support, time freely given, active listening, confidence that ideas can be put forward, and a clear focus for the future.

5.6.7 Leaders recognise that new/insecure colleagues need a different style of approach to established colleagues – but coaching is always helpful.

5.6.8 Leaders often begin with questions, not with answers.

5.6.9 Leaders don't always have, and shouldn't feel they have to have, solutions. The job of a leader is to create an environment in which solutions can be found.

5.6.10 Leaders always remember that ideas are just ideas, and refuse to allow themselves to take a professional discussion personally.

5.6.11 Leaders have nous/poise.

5.6.12 Leaders are open, honest and transparent.

5.6.13 Leaders are in regular contact with their teams, listening to them and offering guidance and support.

5.6.14 Leaders offer others a clear structure in which to operate, both in terms of expectations and procedures.

5.6.15 Leaders create opportunities for debate and discussion.

5.6.16 A leader should know where they are going, even if the route to that goal is negotiable. Some call this having a 'vision'.

5.6.17 Leaders need to have a sound knowledge base, but knowledge isn't everything. A leader can lead others to do what he/she can't personally do.

5.6.18 Leaders know that colleagues expect and demand leadership of them. Never be embarrassed to take on the role.

5.6.19 Leaders always prepare the ground.

5.6.20 Above all: leadership is about maintaining relationships in pursuit of a clearly defined and shared goal.

## 6. Curriculum Design (fortnightly)

### KS3

<u>Year 7</u>		<u>Year 8</u>		<u>Year 9</u>	
English	7	English	7	English	7
Maths	6	Maths (4 sets)	6	Maths (4 sets)	6
French	5	French	5	French (4 sets)	5
Science	7	Science	6	Biology	2
History	4	History	3	Chemistry	2
Geography	3	Geography	3	Physics	2
Art	2	German	5	History	3
D & T	1	Art	2	Geography	3
ICT	2	D & T	1	German (4 sets)	5
RE	3	Music	2	Art	2
Music	2	RE	2	D & T	2
PHSE	1	PE	1	PHSE	1
PE	2	Games (Mon)	4	Music	2
Games (Fri)	4	PHSE	1	RE	2
IT	2	PE	1	Games (Thurs)	4
Transformation	1	IT	2		
	<u>50</u>		<u>50</u>		<u>50</u>

### Key Stage 4

#### Year 10

Block

M	ML	Games	E	RE	PE	Science	PSHE	P	R	T
Pds 6	6	4	6	3	1	3 + 3 + 3	1	5	5	5
Maths Tues 5 sets	French 3 sets German 2 sets		10.1: E 10.2: E 10.3: E 6	RE RE RE 2	PE PE PE 1	Dual Sc. Dual Sc. Dual Sc. 5 + 5	PSHE PSHE PSHE PSHE			
			10.4: E 10.5: E	RE RE	PE PE	Phys+Bio Phys+Bio	PSHE PSHE			

#### Year 11

Block

M	ML	Games	E	RE	PE	Science	Pshe	P	R	T
Pds 6	5	4	6	3	1	3 + 3 + 3	1	5	5	5
Maths 5 sets	French 3 sets German 2 sets	Wed	11.1: E 11.2: E 11.3: E 6	RE RE RE 2	PE PE PE 1	Dual Sc. Dual Sc. Dual Sc. 5 + 5	Pshe Pshe Pshe Pshe	D BSt Gg Hi It	Ar Ch Gg Hi Mu	Ch Ee Ge Gg It
			11.4: E 11.5: E	RE RE	PE PE	Phys + Bio Phys + Bio	Pshe Pshe			

## Sixth Form Curriculum

### **L6 (this is the present 2006-07 Upper Sixth)**

Block A	Block B	Block C	Block D
Art	Biology	French	English
Biology	Chemistry	History	Geography
Economics	English	Computing	Maths
German	Music	History	Geography
PE	Computing	History	Physics
PE	Physics	Psychology	Physics
Theatre Studies	RE	DT	

### **U6**

Block A	Block B	Block C	Block D
Biology	Biology	Business St.	Art
French	Computing	Chemistry	Biology
Geography	Mathematics	Electronics	Chemistry
Computing	RE	English	German
Physics	History	Geography	Physics
History	RE	Physics	Music

## **7. Differentiation**

7.1 Although Skinners' School is a selective school, and the range of ability found in some schools is not so marked, pupils do vary in their capacities and abilities. Their needs must be catered for. Appropriate differentiation is simply the provision for pupils with specific needs, whether it be because they have an identified SEN, or whether it be because they are considered gifted and talented.

7.2 Departments should be alert to the possibility that a pupil may have an unidentified SEN, and be willing to refer to the school's SENCO for assessment.

7.3 Within schemes of work, differentiation should be incorporated as a matter of course. Such differentiation could include 'differentiation by outcome', but this should not be the only means of provision. Differentiation should also be offered through task, expectation, grouping and many other possibilities.

7.4 Departments should also offer differentiation in order to stretch and challenge the most able pupils. This should be in the form of:

extension materials for pupils who finish tasks early...

or

alternative materials where the standard fare might lack sufficient challenge.

7.5 Material to support the most able should satisfy six criteria:

- It should challenge through **quality rather than quantity** of the work provided.

- It should provide **challenge through the nature of the task** rather than the time offered in which to complete it.
- It should be sufficiently **open-ended** to provide opportunity for self-direction and independence of thought.
- It should provide **opportunities for originality and imagination**.
- It should involve **primary sources or first-hand experience**, if possible
- It should be **evaluated** after use by the pupil.

## 8. Homework

8.1 Homework contributes significantly to the curriculum. It does the following:

- It may help a pupil to develop his understanding of a particular subject or idea
- It may introduce new subjects or new ideas
- It may reinforce work done in class
- It may allow opportunities for specific, guided research
- It ought to encourage in each pupil the habit of working and thinking independently
- It ought to instil in each pupil better organisation of materials and time.

8.2 The model for setting of homework is as follows:

Year	Number each day	Approximate duration
7	3	20 mins
8	4 on Fridays 3 on other days	30 mins
9	4 on Fridays and one other day, 3 on remaining days	30 mins
10 & 11	4 on 4 days (including Friday), 3 on the other day	40 mins

Sixth Formers are expected to under take 16 hours of work, outside their school timetable.

- 8.3 Homework should be balanced between those tasks which call for written work, those which focus upon reading and those which involve learning.
- 8.4 Each piece of written homework should be clearly distinguished from the previous. Each should be given a clear heading and date.
- 8.5 Written homework should be marked and returned promptly (see school policy on marking). The expectation is that it would be returned within two weeks. When homework is returned, there should be a class discussion on the key learning points the homework involves.
- 8.6 It is perfectly reasonable to set reading or revision as a homework, but what learning has taken place should be established later in class. Such homework should not be the norm.

8.7 Homework must be treated seriously by staff, if pupils are to take it seriously. It must be set regularly, marked promptly and adhere to common standards of presentation.

8.8 Teachers must ensure that homework is recorded in the Planner when it is set.

## **9. Use of ICT Policy**

9.1 ICT is acknowledged by the School as an essential tool for teaching and learning. It is a basic skill which must be imbued in the pupils, alongside literacy and numeracy. All three are of equal importance.

9.2 The School has and will continue to invest heavily in ICT. There are currently in excess of 170 computers in Skinners' School, giving a pupil to screen ratio of 5:1.

9.3 Every department must give thought to how best their Schemes of Work can offer the pupils experience of using ICT. No department is exempt. Art can offer computer aided processes of creativity; D+T can use computers to aid design and manufacture; English, History, Geography and MFL departments can get pupils to use ICT to gather information and use it to communicate their understanding; in Science, ICT can be used for data-logging and for the generation of charts, tables and diagrams; in Music ICT can be used to generate and manipulate sounds or record compositions; In Mathematics ICT can be used to find approximate solutions to equations and to generate pie charts, graphs and other diagrams; in PE pupils can use Dartfish software to analyse and improve performance. And we have only just scratched the surface of what is possible.

9.4 In addition to these classroom activities, ICT can be used in a variety of important ways to promote leaning. It can:

- Enable pupils' learning to take place outside the school day through the development of departmental intranet sites, and ultimately through the establishment of a Skinners' Virtual Learning Environment;
- Be used by teachers as a tool of demonstration and explanation;
- Be used by pupils to promote higher-order thinking skills;
- Be used by pupils to develop creativity, expressive or communication skills, including the use of ICT to make presentations, give assemblies and express ideas.

9.5 Notwithstanding the many advantages which ICT offers the School and its pupils, there are practices which are unhelpful and which the School wishes to avoid.

- Departments should be discriminating in their use of ICT. Whilst ICT is a vital skill, it should not be privileged over the other literacies, and should not be used for the sake of it;
- Lesson time is a scarce resource. Pupils should not be sent out of lessons to carry out low level ICT based information retrieval tasks or to surf the Internet;
- Pupils below Sixth Form level should not be sent out of rooms, singly or in small groups, to use ICT or the Internet to complete coursework;
- Undirected information retrieval tasks should not be set as homeworks. The generic command "Find out about..." is unhelpful to learning. Instead, pupils should be set specific tasks, which target higher-order learning, such as "Look for evidence which

supports or challenges the claim that..." or "Making use of website X and chapter Y of your textbook, explain..."

## 10. Provision for Gifted and Talented Pupils

### 10.1. Introduction: Identifying the Gifted and Talented

- 10.1.1 The DfES defines 'gifted and talented pupils as the top 5-10% in every school, regardless of its intake. 'Gifted' pupils are defined as those who evidence high attainment or latent high ability in academic subjects; 'talented' pupils are defined as those with evident high attainment or latent high ability in creative or expressive subjects or in sport.
- 10.1.2 Staff need to be aware of this definition but for internal purposes 'gifted and talented' pupils are defined as those who in one or more than one subject would be insufficiently challenged, and their development potentially impeded, were no distinctive provision to be made for them. In other words, gifted and talented pupils are those whose abilities in a given field or fields are such as to give them a species of special educational need.
- 10.1.3 This definition of 'gifted and talented' is in all probability narrower than the official one in that the proportion of pupils requiring distinctive provision as a result of it might well be lower than 10% of all pupils. The School's policy for the gifted and talented has two dimensions; departmental and whole school.
- 10.1.4 The responsibilities of departments within the overall scheme are twofold: first, **identifying** gifted and talented pupils on a subject basis and, second, **making appropriate provision within timetabled lessons** and homework arrangements for those deemed gifted and talented in the subject(s) taught by the department.
- 10.1.5 The rationale behind seeking to identify gifted and talented pupils on a subject rather than a whole-school basis is that an individual pupil's giftedness is most likely to manifest itself within one subject or in a relatively narrow range of subjects rather than across the full spectrum of activities – academic, creative, expressive and sporting – which he undertakes as part of the school curriculum.
- 10.1.6 It follows that it is *not* part of the School's policy to seek to identify a group of pupils deemed 'gifted' in a generic sense – an approach which is implicit in simply regarding the top 5-10% in a school as 'gifted'.
- 10.1.7 It is not part of the School's policy publicly to identify pupils as 'gifted' on either an individual or a group basis. It is essential for teachers to be aware of pupils in their classes who have been identified as gifted because it has pedagogical implications but no very obvious purpose is served by formally disseminating that information more widely.
- 10.1.8 The whole-school dimension of the School's policy for the gifted and talented is described in 10.5.4 below. The immediate development priority is, however, identification of, and provision for, gifted and talented pupils at the departmental level.

## 10.2. Departmental dimension; identifying gifted and talented pupils

- 10.2.1 Departments should devote a post-examination staff development session in the Summer Term to nominating pupils for inclusion on a departmental record, or register, of 'gifted and talented' pupils for the forthcoming academic year.
- 10.2.2 Three points concerning evidence should be borne in mind when nominating pupils for inclusion on the register of gifted pupils.
- (i) The **evidence base needs to be wide**. It should include performance in major tests and examinations; quality of homework and contributions in class.
  - (ii) Particular weight should be attached to the pupil's **higher-order thinking skills** – the skills, for example, of analysis, evaluation, synthesis and problem-solving. Facility in the lower-order thinking skills of comprehension and factual recall should not be allowed to carry the same weight. A strong performance in an end of year examination which targeted comprehension and factual recall heavily would therefore not by itself be compelling evidence of giftedness.
  - (iii) There needs to be evidence of **sustained exceptional performance**; a one-off flash of brilliance is not enough.
- 10.2.3 When making nominations for inclusion on their 'gifted' register departments are asked to bear in mind the characteristics typically associated with giftedness. These can be divided into **general characteristics** and **subject-specific characteristics**.
- 10.2.4 The **general characteristics** associated with giftedness usually include those listed below. It is expected that a gifted student would display most, though not necessarily all, of them.
- i. Self-motivation, concentration, perseverance and an appreciable attention span
  - ii. Exceptional intellectual curiosity e.g. on the nature of man and the universe
  - iii. The ability to think quickly, creatively and imaginatively, including the ability to apply knowledge, experience and insight effectively in unfamiliar situations
  - iv. Having superior powers of reasoning, dealing with abstractions, seeing relationships
  - v. The ability to communicate understanding fluently
  - vi. Having an extended and sophisticated vocabulary
  - vii. Be able to memorize quickly and to assimilate large quantities of information
  - viii. Have the ability to work independently, showing initiative and originality
- 10.2.5 Guidance on possible **subject-specific characteristics** of 'giftedness' is available separately to Heads of Department from the Director of Studies. The material was originally produced for teachers by the Qualifications & Assessment Authority (QCA) and is reproduced here with minor amendments. It might be felt in places to involve statements of the obvious. It is included as guidance and is not intended that it should be interpreted mechanistically. There is also guidance for specific departments in the staffroom in a folder marked 'Gifted and Talented Departmental Advice'.

### 10.3. Departmental dimension: provision for gifted and talented pupils at departmental level

- 10.3.1 The key task at departmental level is to seek to ensure that the needs of gifted pupils are met within lessons through undertaking tasks and activities which, for instance:
- i. Offer **breadth** (tasks, for example, which involve movement beyond the stated syllabus but are not pitched at a level higher than the norm). This may be referred to as 'enrichment'.
  - ii. Give **depth** (i.e. tasks which involve more challenge, detail and complexity than the norm). This may be referred to as extension.
  - iii. Offer opportunities for learning at an accelerated pace e.g. through setting or 'personalized' learning
  - iv. Focus on the development of higher order thinking skills
  - v. Promote **independence and autonomy** (including giving pupils opportunities where possible to pursue their own particular interests)
- 10.3.2 The role of the Head of Department is to ensure that teachers within the department have the knowledge, skills and support needed to adapt their teaching repertoire so as to meet the needs of gifted pupils. It should also be remembered that there is evidence that the more able are particularly influenced by those teachers who are themselves still exploring their own subjects.
- 10.3.3 The Head of Department should ensure that teachers have read, and are conversant with, the relevant literature, in particular the Key Stage Three National Strategy documentation on *Teaching able, gifted and talented pupils* and *Training materials for the Foundation Subjects* and the QCA's *Guidance on teaching the gifted and talented* ([www.nc.uk.net/gt](http://www.nc.uk.net/gt)).
- 10.3.4 Heads of Department should make planned use of staff development time for the discussion of strategies for teaching gifted pupils and the exemplification of good practice in teaching gifted pupils. This should be an agenda item at departmental meetings at least once a term.
- 10.3.5 Heads of Department should monitor the quality of classroom provision for the gifted through (eg) lesson observations undertaken in connection with performance management, other departmental lesson observations and teachers' contributions within departmental staff development time.
- 10.3.6 Heads of Department should monitor the progress of pupils on the gifted and talented register in their subject(s) by asking the relevant teacher(s) to make a verbal progress report at a departmental meeting once a term.
- 10.3.7 It is not the purpose of this policy to prescribe specific departmental approaches to classroom provision for the gifted and talented. In making their dispositions, however, departments should attach particular eight to questioning, task-setting, self-assessment, and seeking to offer gifted pupils opportunities to pursue their own particular interests.
- i. Targeting gifted pupils with oral questions which are open rather than closed and which call for higher-order thinking skills is good practice, though over-exposure of gifted pupils needs to be avoided. Gifted pupils (like others) should also be required to explain or justify their thinking if the initial answer they give to a question does not make their reasoning clear. It is important too that a

classroom climate is created which is conducive to gifted pupils asking questions of teachers.

- ii. Effective setting of written tasks aimed at gifted pupils can only take place within a department if members of the department are clear about what constitutes high-level performance in their subject, are familiar with the idea of higher-order thinking and how it manifests itself in their subject and can set tasks which effectively target higher-order thinking skills.
- iii. Discrete 'extension' tasks specifically aimed at gifted pupils have a role to play in departmental provision but this is not the only kind of task which is appropriate. There is a role too for common tasks involving different responses and outcomes (differentiation by outcome); 'stepped' tasks which have an incline of difficulty or a range of steps, with the gifted and talented entering at a higher level and take the task further, and separate tasks linked to a common theme or arising from a common piece of stimulus material. Departments should aim to have a range of tasks of different types and styles available for gifted pupils.
- iv. Departments should when devising cross-cohort exercises bear the needs of gifted pupils in mind. Such exercises should be designed to enable very high levels of achievement to be reached; artificial cut-off points or ceilings need if possible to be avoided. Where tasks have already been set they should be reviewed with this criterion in mind.
- v. Departments should be clear about precisely how tasks of different kinds aimed at the gifted meet their needs. It might, for example, because they are: **abstract** (involving more abstract materials, ideas or applications); **complex** (involving greater complexity in terms of resources, research, issues and problems or skills practised); **transformational** (involving greater transformation or manipulation of information, ideas, materials and applications); **divergent** (allowing pupils to make connections within or across subjects or to plan an enquiry that takes them in a range of directions); or **open-ended** (involving pupils taking responsibility for decisions, approaches and solutions).
- vi. The assessment for learning agenda is relevant to gifted pupils because their giftedness makes them especially alert to the criteria against which their work is being judged, enables them in some cases to challenge these criteria or to devise performance criteria of their own.
- vii. Teachers of pupils on the gifted register need through their dealings with them to establish what their current interests within the subject are and to seek to build on those interests by (for example) suggesting further reading or suggesting related fields they might explore ('if you like that, you'll like this'). Developing extension reading lists for the work done in each year group, and drawing those lists to the attention of gifted pupils, is also to be recommended.

#### **10.4 Whole school dimension: existing provision and future development**

10.4.1 Existing whole-school provision for abler pupils consists of three main elements which together offer opportunities for extension, enrichment and acceleration. These are described below. Further development of whole-school provision is envisaged within *School Development Plan 2006-2008* and is the responsibility of the Deputy Headmaster.

10.4.2 The School's **curricular structure** at Key Stage Four and in the Sixth is flexible and has meeting the needs of gifted and talented pupils as one of its aims. In Mathematics and Science there is distinctive provision for talented pupils. In Mathematics,

talented pupils take a full GCSE course in Statistics as well as in Mathematics and in the process cover some of the Statistics required for A level Mathematics. In Science, a cohort of talented pupils offers 'triple science' as opposed to the Dual or Single Awards. There are two routes through the Sixth Form designed for gifted and talented students. Alternative Route 1, designed for the ablest 10%, involves studying either five subjects to A level or four to A level and one to AS level. Alternative Route 2 involves studying four subjects to A level. Further Mathematics is an A level option available to the most gifted mathematicians in the Sixth.

10.4.3 The School makes extensive use of **setting** key subjects. Setting arrangements have meeting the needs of the ablest pupils as one of their objects. In Mathematics and Modern Foreign Languages pupils are set by ability in Years 8-11. In Science they are effectively set by ability in Years 10 and 11 as a result of the existence of two routes through GCSE Science. The School is willing to contemplate further development of setting arrangements, subject to timetabling constraints, if a department wishes to make out a case for it.

10.4.4 Outside the classroom, the School offers an extensive programme of **curriculum extension and extra-curricular activities**. This programme is not aimed exclusively at gifted and talented pupils – though in a number of cases participation is dependent on ability – but offering such pupils opportunities to pursue and develop their particular interests is central to its purpose. The list which follows is not exhaustive but serves to illustrate the range of activities on offer.

- ◆ In Mathematics, pupils take part in the Mathematics Challenges organised by the UK Mathematics Trust at junior (Year 8), intermediate (Year 10) and senior (Years 12 and 13) levels.
- ◆ The School enters teams annually in four major inter-school debating competitions and there are as well internal opportunities to take part in organised debated.
- ◆ In Physical Education there is a full programme of inter-school representative fixtures covering all the major sports and pupils have the opportunity to go on to win further honours at district and county level.
- ◆ In Music, membership of the orchestra is open to the most talented instrumentalists and there are further opportunities for ensemble playing through a variety of other groups. Pupils are also able through the auspices of the School to take graded Music tests to the highest level.
- ◆ In Modern Foreign Languages, there is an exchange visit with a school in Germany.
- ◆ The History Department organises study visits.
- ◆ The Geography Department offer specialist visits in addition to their fieldwork programmes.
- ◆ There is each year a full and varied programme of visits to concerts and drama in London and elsewhere which gives interested pupils the opportunity to experience performance at the highest level.

## 10.5 The Provision of Extra-curricular Opportunities

### 10.5.1 The Significance of Extra-Curricular Life

The School's extra-curricular life is exceptionally important in that it provides opportunities for growth and development to pupils outside the teaching day. Many

Departments contribute to the programme and sport, music, drama, travel and societies all contribute significantly. See Section 18 for more details.

#### 10.5.2 **The School's Sporting Life**

The School enjoys a vibrant sporting life and provides opportunities in rugby, football, basketball, athletics, badminton, squash, volleyball, cricket and swimming. Over 200 fixtures are played each year against other schools. Boys have the opportunity to play sport at lunchtime and after School and the Head of Physical Education seeks to provide a fully integrated programme of events.

### **11. Special Educational Needs Policy**

- 11.1 The Skinners' School is a Selective boys' school for the 11-18 age range. The School's Admission Policy, as approved by the Secretary of State when granting incorporation as a Grant Maintained School, states that admission will be by aptitude and ability.

As presently constituted therefore, the School does not admit boys with severe learning difficulties. The School's curriculum is designed to "encourage each boy to gain the best academic qualifications of which he is capable, as a foundation for his future education and career." (See School Aims adopted by the Education and Development Committee 31 March 1992, as the Aims of the Secular Curriculum).

- 11.2. The School's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator is Mrs Hann. She maintains the SEN register, and directs the education plan of each boy with special needs. She is managed by the Staff Tutor.
- 11.3. The School has taken due regard of the Code of Practice on the identification and assessment of special educational needs, as it is required to do under the 1993 Education Act and regulations made thereunder.
- 11.4. The School assesses its pupils for progress, both in achievement and application, each half term. Formal examinations for Years 7-11 and Year 12 take place twice in each academic year; in December and June. Year 11 and Year 13 boys receive trial examinations in December, in preparation for their public examinations in the following summer.

All boys have full access to the National Curriculum. End of Key Stage Testing and Reporting is fully in place, so far as regulations presently apply.

- 11.5. Individual teachers are encouraged to use the agreed departmental and whole School assessment policies to help them identify particular learning difficulties.
- 11.6. Learning difficulties that give rise to Special Educational Needs may be defined as:
- (a) If he or she finds it much harder to learn than most children of the same age.

(b) If he or she has a disability which makes it difficult for him or her to use the normal educational facilities in the area.

11.7. The School's response to SEN is as follows:

**Referral**

**Wave 1**

**Wave 2**

**Wave 3**

11.8. **The Individual Education Plan**

An individual education plan should be drawn up for all children at Stages 2 and 3 and should contain the following information:

- the nature of the child's learning difficulties.
- action to be taken
- the special educational provision
- staff involved, including frequency and timing of support specific programmes/activities/materials/equipment and for stage 3 only, external specialists involved.
- help from parents at home
- targets to be achieved in a given time
- any pastoral care or medical requirements
- monitoring and assessment arrangements
- statements from class teachers indicating their actions
- review arrangements and date.

11.9. The School acknowledges that, even within the relatively narrow range of ability of grammar school pupils, there are sharp differences in ability and aptitude. The School has therefore devised teaching strategies which are designed to meet the Special Educational Needs of its pupils, and especially the Special Educational needs of the most able pupils. Each Department is asked to record its own strategies for dealing with very able pupils.

To this end, pupils are setted for ability in Mathematics (from Year 8) and French and German (from Year 9). GCSE Mathematics is taken by the most able pupils in Year 10 and they go on to study Statistics and AS maths in Year 11.

A discriminating programme of Science Education has been developed so that in Years 10 and 11 **three** separate Science GCSEs are offered to the most able; and dual award Combined Science is offered to boys who either show less aptitude for Science or else wish to develop specialisms elsewhere.

It is **not** the School's policy to set boys by ability in History, Geography, English and Technology, amongst other subjects. Staffing provision is sufficient to permit group size to be well below thirty in Years 10 and 11; appropriate teaching strategies and individual attention to able pupils are therefore possible in these subjects.

In the Sixth Form, boys characteristically choose four AS and three 'A' level subjects; or two 'A' level subjects and two Advanced Supplementary level subjects. The most able Mathematicians take Advanced level Mathematics in Year 12, and then Further Mathematics in Year 13. The programme is particularly flexible, and designed to meet the needs of each pupil.

- 11.11. The School monitors the physical health of its pupils with the assistance of medical support services. Form Tutors take an active pastoral role in helping pupils with minor disabilities. A list of boys who have any kind of medical condition known to the School will be maintained in the Deputy Headteacher's desk in the Common Room.
- 11.11. The physical layout of the School, with many steps and narrow staircases, separate buildings and a playing field located fifteen minutes' walk away from the School does not readily lend itself to the well-being of pupils with severe physical disabilities.

However, in their published proposals, required under Section 62(7) of the Education Reform Act 1988, for the acquisition of Grant Maintained Status, the Governors resolved in paragraph 6 that "The School will do all that is practicable to meet the needs both of outstandingly gifted pupils and of those who while achieving Selection suffer from some form of disability." See separate Gifted and Talented policy.

#### **11.12. Conclusion**

In conclusion, the broad aims of The Skinners' School Special Educational Needs Policy may be expressed in the following objectives:

- (a) To keep all teachers aware of the principles and details of the Special Educational Needs Policy.
- (b) To make all pupils aware of their own progress. This is accomplished by the School's Assessment Policies, and recording system and target setting.
- (c) Arrangements exist to deal with general or specifically academic complaints. In the first place, parents are encouraged to report their concerns to the Headteacher. **The School aims to deal effectively with any such complaints.**
- (d) To monitor Individual Education Plans so that the extent to which boys are meeting targets can be assessed.

The School will assess the effectiveness of its Special Educational Needs policy against these objectives and report on the effectiveness of the Policy to parents in the Annual Report of Governors to Parents. Parents will have an opportunity at the Annual Parents' Meeting, normally held in December each year, to comment on the Policy, its procedures and its effectiveness.

## **12. Departmental Planning and Records.**

- 12.1 Departments should maintain an up to date Departmental Handbook, setting out the department's approach to the curriculum, their resources and other pertinent matters. A copy should be given to the Director of Studies. It should be reviewed each year.
- 12.2 Departments must maintain schemes of work for each year. The SoW should be comprehensive, take account of differentiation and reflect the departments contribution to cross-curricular issues, such as literacy, citizenship, environmental awareness and economic understanding.
- 12.3 Departments must maintain their Departmental Development Plan, written in the light of the Whole School Development Plan. See Appendix 1 for an example of a Departmental Development Plan and the Appendix 2 for the Whole School Development Plan.
- 12.4 The goals of the Departmental Development Plan should be expressed through the targets set for subject teachers in their Review Meeting for Performance Management.
- 12.5 Departments should maintain a register of gifted and talented pupils.
- 12.6 Departments should ensure that markbooks are colour-coded to show pupils with varying degrees of SEN and G+T pupils.
- 12.7 Departments should maintain records of year-on-year pupil progress.
- 12.8 The Head of Department should observe each member of the department at least twice a year. Records should be kept on the school's standard lesson observation form. A formal feedback should be provided to the teacher on every occasion that they are observed. Written evidence of the observation must be retained by the Head of Department and passed on to the Staff Tutor. See Appendix 3 for the observation form.
- 12.9 The Head of Department should undertake a work scrutiny exercise of at least one year group three times a year. Written records should be kept by the Head of Department. Work scrutiny will be to assess for evidence of AfL opportunities for the pupils, check the accuracy of a teacher's NC levelling, ensure that appropriate work is set in line with departmental schemes of work and confirm that the work is regularly marked according to the whole school policy.
- 12.10 The Head of Department should undertake a statistical analysis of pupil performance in public and school examinations, as well as any levelled exercises undertaken. Records should be kept.
- 12.11 Departments are involved in the target-setting process for each pupil. They should maintain records of the targets and ensure that each pupil knows his target.

## **13. Whole School Assessment for Learning Policy**

- 13.1 Assessment for Learning is a central focus of Skinners' School. Properly undertaken, it should:

- Help pupils to learn how to learn, through skills of self-assessment;
- Focus pupils' learning, by ensuring that they understand the criteria by which their learning will be judged;
- Provide a clear assessment of the current level of achievement of each pupil;
- Identify the next steps for each pupil to progress towards their target;
- Model successful pieces of work for pupils;
- Give pupils a sense of success, and hence a greater motivation to learn;
- Give teachers a clear indication of the extent to which their teaching has had an impact.

13.2 The main means through which AfL will be delivered are:

- Oral feedback to individual pupils, whether by the teacher, or another pupil;
- Oral feedback to pupils as a group, whether by the teacher, or another pupil;
- Written comments on pupils' work, whether by the teacher, or another pupil;
- Group discussion of performance against established criteria.

13.3 Such feedback should always take account of the criteria by which the work should be judged. It should recognise positive qualities as well as asking "what would make it even better?"

13.4 Written feedback to work (in other words, marking), should involve a numerical mark and a written comment. The comment is the most effective tool for driving pupil improvement, but only if:

- It is offered promptly, while the task is still fresh in the pupil's mind;
- It focuses upon issues of learning rather than presentation or effort (though neither should be ignored);
- It is analytical - it identifies strengths and areas for improvement and offers clear guidance on the next steps required;
- It isn't bland - "Well done" or "Good";
- It is supportive in tone;
- It is offered as part of a sequence of comments taking the pupil forward.

13.5 The numerical mark is helpful in driving improvement in boys. Natural competitiveness will cause boys to seek to improve their marks. The school's policy on providing regular moderated NC levels is made clear in 13.4. However, departments are free to use their own numerical measures of achievement when marking homeworks, tests, essays and other exercises that are not suitable for levelling purposes, providing the system chosen is consistently applied across the department, and has been agreed with the Director of Studies.

## **14. Target-Setting and Monitoring Progress**

14.1 Target-setting is crucial. Target-setting establishes the School's expectation for the pupil in each subject. We set targets using 'Type D' data from the Fischer Family Trust. This will be modified by the professional judgements of departments, although the expectation is that such modifications will be upwards rather than downwards.

- 14.2 Targets will be referred to in all progress and written reports and the pupil's attainment will be measured against his individual target in that subject.
- 14.3 Progression towards targets will be measured against level ladders. These are displayed on classroom walls and (in some departments) stuck into pupils' books.
- 14.4 Once a term, with the exception of term 6, every pupil will take a levelled, moderated piece of work in each of his subjects. An exception is made for the PE, RE, DT, Art and Music departments, who will make three such assessments per year. This data will then be given to the data manager to be processed.
- 14.5 Departments should set aside time in departmental meetings to discuss individual pupil progress. Attention should also be specifically given to the progress of groups of pupils, such as SEN or Gifted and Talented pupils.

## **15. Progress Reports and Sixth Form Progress Reports**

- 15.1 The School's Progress Report will be issued to parents each term, except where another form of summative assessment has been given (such as a parents' evening or a full written report). See Appendix 4 for an example.
- 15.1 The Progress Report will give the pupil's target in each of his subjects. His academic progress will be measured against this target. Thus academic progress is measured against national levels and the pupil's own potential.
- 15.2 The pupil's attitude to learning is measured on a four point scale against four criteria – behaviour in lessons, contribution to class discussion, quality of homework and quality of class work. These assessments are used to generate a single number which describes the pupil's approach to work. Parents are told in the report that number, the highest (and worst) number in the year group, the lowest (and best number in the year group, and the upper and lower quartiles. Parents and pupils thus have a very clear sight of the pupil's attitude to learning relative to his peers. Red and blue colour coding reinforce these messages.
- 15.3 In the Sixth Form, target grades are also offered, but instead of the assessment of attitude to learning, the student is considered against eight essential attributes of a good Sixth Form scholar. Where concern is expressed in a specific attribute, a red bar is placed against that column. See Appendix 5 for an example.
- 15.4 Heads of Year and Form Tutors receive detailed breakdowns of the information contained in Progress Reports.

## **16. Written Reports**

- 16.1 A full written report is issued once a year, at the time most likely to have an impact upon pupil performance.

- 16.2 Staff are issued with clear guidance on how to offer a helpful and clear report. See Appendix 6 for an exemplar written report.
- 16.3 DfES and QCA guidance on report writing is helpful:

### **16.3.1 DfES: Some principles of good report writing (2001)**

The following is offered as advice on ‘the principles of good reporting’ in the Key Stage Three Assessment and reporting arrangements document published annually by the Qualifications & Curriculum Authority and the Department for Education.

#### **Target the audience**

Reports should be written for parents in a clear and straightforward way.

Most parents want to know:

- How their child is performing in relation to their potential and past achievements, to the rest of the class, and to national standards;
- Their child’s strengths and any particular achievements; areas for development and improvement;
- How they can help;
- Whether their child is settled and behaving well.

**Reports should be personal to the pupil.** There is evidence that some parents dislike statement banks or computer-generated reports when this leads to them being impersonal. Reports should be well written and legible, with correct grammar, punctuation and spelling. Comments should be as succinct as possible and use wording which is precise and appropriate. Jargon should be avoided if it is unlikely to be understood. National Curriculum Levels must be mentioned, but with guidance to assist parents in grasping what is being said.

#### **Concentrate on performance**

The report should concentrate on what the pupil has or has not learnt, rather than what has been taught. It should indicate what standards the pupil has achieved and whether any comparison is being made with his or her progress in other subjects, with previous performance, with other pupils in the class or against national standards.

#### **Motivate the pupil to make further progress**

Reports can be an important way of helping pupils make progress. Pupils can be motivated by using the “What has your son done well?” section to highlight their strengths and recognising and valuing achievements in different areas of school life, including social, cultural and academic. However, in the section devoted to areas for development, they should be clearly identified and suggestions made about how these can be improved. It is important not to obscure low achievement or underachievement by the use of faint praise or by avoiding any mention of the problem. Reports should give an accurate picture of current attainment. They can then be used to involve the pupil in setting clear, achievable and time-related targets for his or her learning. Even the most able and conscientious pupil can be given suggestions about how to make further progress.

### **16.3.2 QCA: Suggested principles of good report writing (2003)**

General points applicable to the whole report

- The report should be written for parents in a clear and straightforward way. However, schools should be mindful that the majority of pupils will read their report.
- The report should be personal to the pupil.
- The report should be written in plain English and legible. Comments should be as succinct as possible, using words that are precise and appropriate.
- Jargon should be avoided if it is likely to be misunderstood.
- Reports should indicate whether or not the child is happy, settled and behaving well.
- The report should advise parents how they can help and support their child.

Points applicable to individual subject reports

- The report should give an indication of attainment and progress within the subject areas covered during the year – it should be general enough to suggest breadth and specific enough to give parents a clear understanding of the progress made by their child.
- The report must include a national curriculum level when there is a statutory requirement to report a level at the end of the key stage. This information may be presented on a separate sheet.
- The report should indicate how the pupil's work compares with the average for pupils of their age.
- The report should indicate effort as well as attainment.
- The report should indicate strengths and areas for improvement.
- Where there are specific suggestions for 'How to improve' or Targets, these must be clear to the pupil.

### **16.3.3 OFSTED**

'In some schools there is a weakness in reports prepared by teachers. Some teachers write more about effort and attitude than actual attainment and a major weakness in reports in many schools remains their failure to identify weaknesses in pupil progress and attainment or the subject-specific targets which pupils need to address.'

(OFSTED Review of Secondary Schools in England, 1997)

## **16.4 Guidance specific to Skinners' School on writing subject comments:**

### **16.4.1 The need for analysis**

A piece of written commentary which both recognises what a pupil has achieved and identifies what needs to be done if further progress is to be made is one which, by definition, is analytical. The particular areas which might be addressed in an analysis of pupil achievement and progress include:

In "How well is your son achieving?"

- Levels of motivation and of interest in the subject
- Levels of effort and application; powers of organisation and concentration (including adherence to homework schedules and behaviour in class)
- Levels of knowledge and understanding
- Levels of attainment in relation to prior evidence of ability
- Reference to the target set for the pupil and his current NC level of attainment

In "What does your son do well?"

- Subject-specific abilities and skills (for example, problem solving abilities, ability to structure a piece of extended writing, practical skills)
- Powers of communication, including quality of written English
- Quality of oral contributions in class

In “How could your son improve?”

- Priorities for improvement in order to make further progress

It is not, of course, being suggested that each of these points should be explicitly addressed in every individual report but in a good report, a number of them are likely to be made. What is wanted above all in reports which go out from the School is an honest appraisal of a pupil’s strengths and weaknesses. What is to be avoided is bland and uninformative commentary of the ‘Satisfactory work and progress’ kind.

#### **16.4.2 Tone**

In the “How could your son improve?” and “What does your son do well?” sections, avoid commentary which is purely negative in tone. There may be pupils who in the face of all efforts by teaching staff have made little or no effort and who have achieved little or nothing. In cases of this kind it is obviously not expected that false praise or blithe optimism should feature in a subject teacher’s written commentary. Such pupils are, however, rare. The overwhelming majority of pupils make an effort of some kind and have achievements to show for their efforts. What has been achieved ought to be recognised in some form in a subject teacher’s written commentary even if, as may well be the case, most of it is given over to a discussion of what needs to be done if the pupil’s work is to improve. What is wanted is a tone which is sympathetic and encouraging though not uncritical. Language which might be construed as personally disparaging to the pupil needs to be avoided. Words like ‘abysmal’, ‘shameful’ or ‘hopeless’ are cases in point. Avoid too any hint of personal animus in reports, however trying a pupil might have been. Point out a pupil’s failings, certainly, but do so in a tone which is detached and professional.

#### **16.4.3 Avoidance of truisms**

Statements which are more or less true by definition should be avoided. Statements such as ‘if A worked harder he would achieve better results’ are unhelpful and obvious. There may perhaps be some pupils in some subjects who could not achieve better results however much harder they tried – but for the majority it is more or less self-evident that more effort would lead to greater achievements.

#### **16.4.4 Personal or impersonal?**

The written commentary on your reports is addressed to the pupil’s parents. As a matter of courtesy, it is best to refer to the pupil using his first name at the outset of the report and a combination of forename and the impersonal form (‘he..’) thereafter. Do not use diminutive forms of pupils’ forenames or nicknames in school reports.

#### **16.4.5 Abbreviations and jargon**

Abbreviations such as ‘hwk’ for homework and ‘cwk’ for coursework should not be used on reports. Avoid too the use of educational jargon or shorthand which would not be readily intelligible to a lay audience.

Colleagues should note that the quality of report writing is monitored and that there are circumstances (use of an identically-worded comment on a significant number of reports, for example) in which a member of staff may be required to re-write his or her comments.

#### **16.4.6 Pupil and Parental Comments**

The pupil comment is an essential element of the report. It exists to ensure that the pupil engages with the ideas and advice in the report, and so improves. Pupils, especially lower down the school, will need careful guidance from their tutor if they are to make the most of the opportunity. In particular, pupils must not offer bland endorsements or denials of the teachers’ comments, nor must they simply offer vague promises of future improvement. Specific goals, targets and responses must be elicited.

Parental comments are important in a number of ways. They involve the parent in the learning of their child; they allow the opportunity for parental feedback on the report itself; they ensure that communication between teachers and parents has taken place.

#### **16.4.7 Tutor Comments**

The Tutor comment is very important element in the report. It provides an opportunity for Tutors to offer personal comments on attitude to learning, relationships with others, extra-curricular involvement, appearance and courtesy. It should make clear to pupil and parent that the pupil is well known and is valued. The Tutor comment should **not** offer overarching summations of academic performance – leave that to the Headmaster’s comment.

## **17. Careers Education and Guidance Policy**

### **17.1 Introduction**

Careers Education covers four inter-linked areas:

Self-development –	helping students to understand themselves and develop their capabilities;
Career exploration -	helping students to investigate careers and opportunities;
Career management –	helping students to implement their plans
Breadth of Opportunities –	providing students with opportunities to participate in activities to further their Careers Education

The School recognises that this must be achieved within the context of a constantly changing employment scene and a widening range of pre-vocational courses and training as well as changes within established academic studies, such as A Level. This will be done within the context of an academic Grammar School where in excess of 85% of Year 11 enter the Sixth Form of the School. The vast majority will proceed to Higher Education.

The Policy draws a clear distinction between careers education and careers guidance while recognising that they are interlinked and interdependent activities. Careers education provides a means of developing individuals’ knowledge, understanding and experience of

opportunities in education, training and employment and the skills necessary to make informed decisions. Careers guidance provides a means of helping individuals to apply relevant knowledge, understanding and skills to their own particular circumstances when choices have to be made. The importance of careers guidance will be most notable at Skinners' when pupils are choosing options in Years 9, 11, 12 and 13.

## **17.2 Aims and Outcomes of the Careers Education and Guidance Programme**

17.2.1 The School has designed a careers education and guidance programme to help students take responsibility for moving on in their lives. The early years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century will be a period of continuing and rapid technological, social and economic change in which careers will be more varied, more complex and more uncertain. Using outcomes from careers education and guidance can help pupils to make better choices and improve their life chances by giving them the opportunity to participate in and contribute to society through the work they do.

17.2.2 The Careers Education and Guidance programme at Skinners' aims to promote self-development so pupils can make well informed educational and vocational choices. The programme should enable pupils to make good progress in developing their knowledge, understanding and skills relative to their capabilities. The programme should allow pupils to know their own strengths and weaknesses, personal qualities and preferences.

17.2.3 A second aim of our programme is to promote career exploration. Pupils should have a broad and accurate knowledge and understanding of the world of work, and of educational, training and employment opportunities that are available locally, regionally and nationally. They should have accurate and comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the opportunities open to themselves individually as members of a Grammar school.

17.2.4 The programme will promote career management. Pupils should learn to make effective choices in relation to anticipated education, training and occupations. They should know how to manage and, where appropriate, effect transitions to new roles and situations.

17.2.5 The final aim of the programme is to provide a breadth of opportunities. Pupils will be given the opportunity to take part in activities to further their Careers education. This will include working with ICT, other students and outside groups.

## **17.3 Careers Education Programme**

### **17.3.1 Delivery at The Skinners' School**

The Careers Education programme at Skinners' is delivered across the curriculum. There is a regular audit of delivery, biannually. In addition, pupils participate in a planned programme of work related learning, with five days set aside during Years 10 and 11.

### **17.3.2 Staff Training and Development**

The Head of Careers attends a variety of INSET courses.

### **17.3.3 Monitoring and Reviewing the Careers Education Programme**

The role of the Head of Careers is to co-ordinate, evaluate and monitor the CEG programme. This will include auditing delivery in Key Stages 3 and 4 and suggesting improvements to a dynamic programme. The Head of Careers will be able to improve the programme with the provision of suitable curriculum resources to departments using materials from the Careers Library.

## 17.4. Careers Guidance

### 17.4.1 Delivery of Career Guidance

Formal CG begins in Year 9 when pupils are required to consider KS4 options. A booklet outlining students' KS4 options is distributed to students and parents. In addition, an information evening is held for all members of Year 9 and their parents. During this session the Headmaster explains KS4 options and supported by senior staff offers guidance in particular cases. All members of Year 11 have a personal interview with a Connexions advisor, as well as a meeting with a member of the Senior Management Group.

17.4.2 The careers guidance procedures for KS3 and 4 are outlined in the summary of the careers curriculum. In addition very comprehensive guidance procedures operate in the Sixth Form. During the summer term of Year 12, a post A Level options information session is held. The emphasis is on Higher Education for approximately 90 to 95% of all members of the Upper Sixth will apply to HE. At the end of the information session, all members of Year 12 are asked to complete an intention form.

17.4.3 A Higher Education Evening takes place during the summer term. During this evening the Headmaster explains the University system and discusses the application procedures. The Headmaster, the Head of Sixth Form, the Director of Studies and the Head of Careers, offer individual counselling on choices of universities and the completion of the UCAS form. The Head of Sixth Form will offer detailed guidance on the completion of the personal section of the UCAS form. These arrangements should enable the student to present himself in the best way possible to a University.

17.4.4 The Head of Careers provides guidance to students who are considering entering employment, training or FE and each student is offered a formal interview. The interview provides the opportunity for in-depth career exploration, career development and career management. The Head of Careers monitors the progress of these students throughout Year 13. All Year 13 students who are seeking employment will be offered an interview with a Connexions Careers Adviser. This interview will complement the internal School procedures.

## 17.5 The Enterprise Curriculum

Contents:	Requirement	Examples	Implementation
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### Requirement:

From September 2005 secondary schools in England have had to provide all KS4 pupils with the equivalent of five days' activity focused on enterprise capability, innovation, creativity, risk management and risk taking, and a "can-do-attitude".

Schools at the moment are free to develop their own programmes, which dovetail with their existing arrangements, activities and partnerships. However, the five days should include activities towards the latter part of the KS4 in Year 11, enabling pupils to draw on their previous enterprise learning in applying their skills, knowledge and understanding, in order to demonstrate their enterprise capability.

## Examples

As 'Enterprise education' is part of work-related learning, schools must have regard to QCA guidance.

Some examples of enterprise activities:

- Business and community projects;
- Mini enterprises;
- Simulations;
- Work and Community placements; and
- Enterprise days and events

## Implementation

The Ofsted recommendations for implementing enterprise education are:

- Develop enterprise learning as part of a coherent programme of vocational and work related learning;
- Establish a clear definition of enterprise learning and ensure it is understood by staff, pupils and other stakeholders;
- Identify the learning outcomes pupils are expected to gain from enterprise activities;
- Recognise that enterprise learning has implications for teaching and learning styles (i.e. to encourage pupils to take more responsibility and give them greater autonomy);
- Develop effective methods of assessing enterprise learning; and
- Have robust systems in place for monitoring and evaluating its development.

At Skinners' we endeavour to delivery this curriculum through the five day programme, co-ordinated through East Kent.

## 17.6 Partnership with External Links

The careers programme has a number of external links which are outlined in the CEG policy document. These include:

17.6.1 Industrial Activities: The School organises and runs industrial activities for each year group between Year 9 and Year 12. Each of these activities has a specific set of objectives and outcomes.

17.6.2 Partnership with Connexions: Under the guidance of the Head of Careers the School has developed links with Connexions and considers these links to be of importance in the delivery of the School's Careers Guidance programme. The aim of Connexions at Skinners' is to provide in partnership with the Head of Careers, a service to students which will help them to reach informed, realistic decisions about their careers.

Each year the Deputy Headmaster negotiates a 'Partnership Agreement'. The partnership agreements are formal statements of working arrangements. They provide the opportunity to review jointly the effectiveness of the CEG programme and to agree roles and responsibilities, resourcing, provision of information and other factors to ensure high quality careers education and guidance.

### 17.6.3 Links with Parents and the Wider School Community

Parents remain the primary influences of young peoples' first steps along the route to employment. Their perceptions of their children's personality, interests, aptitudes and

abilities – along with their view of what is the best next step from the School – must be taken into account in the process of career guidance.

The School recognises that decisions taken by students at points of transition can be helped by a free exchange of information between the School, the student and parents. Parents and former students can be a rich source of useful careers information gained from their own life experiences. There is a significant governor, parents and past student input into the work related programme.

#### 17.6.4 Work Experience and Sixth Form Community Service

Work Experience is an educational activity which is undertaken in the workplace. Work Experience plays an important role in the careers education and guidance programme. It is part of the School's work relating learning programme. The Head of Wider Learning works with Denise Tourle to allow the development and assessment of the Work Experience programme.

The Sixth Form Activities programme on Wednesday afternoons provides members of the Sixth Form with the opportunity to perform community service.

#### 17.6.5 Links with Universities and Educational Organisations

The School encourages members of the Sixth Form to attend well established extra-curricular courses. These may increase students' understanding of a particular discipline, e.g. Engineering and/or offer students a taste of life at university.

### **17.7 Careers Education and Guidance Resources**

17.7.1 Good information is the foundation of any programme of careers education and guidance. The School has a Careers Library which contains information and communication technology resources. The School offers students a range of materials to enable them to decide which options to pursue.

17.7.2 The Careers Library contains a range of up-to-date, comprehensive printed materials. This includes a large range of occupational information, filed according to the CLCI system, on all career areas relevant to the students. In addition, a full series of Further and Higher Education prospectuses forms part of the Careers Library. The library has a number of directories relevant to employment and higher education opportunities.

17.7.3 The Careers Library is mainly a reference only library although students may withdraw resources by arrangement with the Head of Careers. All students may use the Careers Library when they are not attending lessons.

### **17.8 Assessing the Effectiveness of the CEG Programme**

17.8.1 Assessment supports teaching and learning in careers education and guidance by providing a way of measuring the progress individuals have made in achieving worthwhile outcomes and of helping them to identify what they need to do next. In line with QCA recommendations, the School believes that the learning outcomes of the careers programme do not require the precision of traditional assessment criteria. They need to be expressed in terms which are clear to learners, manageable and flexible enough to allow for the different ways and circumstances in which learners make progress (QCA - Learning outcomes from

careers education and guidance 1999). The CEG policy document includes a comprehensive account of the criteria used to assess the effectiveness of the CEG programme.

### **17.8.2 Careers Education Audit**

#### **1. Recognise, develop and apply their skills for enterprise and employability**

##### Maths

- Cooperation is working with others in class
- Problem solving skills enhanced
- Reasoning skills developed
- Learn to articulate and justify steps taken to lead to a valid conclusion
- Numeracy skills developed and applied to a variety of situations

##### History

- Literacy, numeracy, evaluation, problem-solving

##### English

- Writing to persuade ) useful for CV plus
- Writing to explain and inform ) applications
- Deadlines
- Independent learning/organisation

##### Geography

- Research and study and select information
- Set hypotheses
- Methodology of data collection
- Problem solving exercises
- Follow through coursework research techniques

##### Chemistry

- Work experience and Young Scientist days at GSK

##### Electronics

- GCSE coursework
- Applying understanding to practical situations

##### ICT

- Students could be linked with Work Experience coordinators so that students' knowledge of ICT applications in work place can be developed.

##### Biology

- Independent learning, meeting deadlines, working with others, respecting views of others, honesty and integrity, care of the workplace, ICT work.

##### RE

- Communication skills, oral and written
- Collaboration in groups, ICT

## Art

- Collaborative work, meeting deadlines, sharing ideas and materials, ICT work, independent learning.

## Business Studies

- Understand business plans, job selection and recruitment process, skills needed to run businesses, Enterprise Day.

## Physics

- Collecting evidence, individual responsibility for practical tasks, working in teams, exchanging information

## PE

- Cooperation in working with others as well as individually and in a team situation.

## **2. Use their experience of work, including work experience and part time jobs, to extend their understanding of work.**

## English

- Discussion, presentations

## Geography

- Role play – use of maps and plans in surveying or giving directions etc

## Chemistry

- Young Scientist Days and work experience placements at GSK

## Biology

- Work experience for potential medics, vets etc often dispels the “glamour” of these particular careers!

## Art

- Many student taking Art & Design undertake arty work experience which comes in very useful when they can see the contexts to which their techniques and skills can be put.

## **3. Learn about the way business enterprises operate, working roles and conditions, and rights and responsibilities in the work place.**

## Maths

- Topics concerned with buying and selling, taxes and interest.

## English

- Team work – media project.
- Possibility of interviews for roles from literature, eg. Raleigh in Journey’s End.

## Geography

Through role play. eg. Attitudes towards developing a local quarry, where students take on the roles of local businesses, MPs, environmentalists and farmers.

#### Electronics

- Responsibility for safety: risk assessments are routinely undertaken where relevant in demonstrations and practicals
- Environmental responsibility. eg. Pollution, energy resources, efficiency.

#### ICT

- Systems life cycle – roles of systems analysts and software developers
- Health and Safety when using ICT
- Relationships between ICT and society, Data Protection Act, Computer Misuse Act
- Advantages/disadvantages of changing work patterns. eg. Working from home.

#### Biology

- Health and Safety opportunities – safe practical work and care of equipment
- Ability to follow simple and/or complex instructions to achieve an outcome
- Safety – awareness of others in the work place – group work or sharing equipment.

#### RE

- Respect for others in the workplace
- Knowledge of laws affecting prejudice and discrimination

#### Art

- Health and Safety considerations:
  - Safety in practical work
  - Care of equipment and environment
  - Respect for safety of others when working together

#### Business Studies

- Business start up – role of stakeholders, shareholders, managers and employees in a firm
- Trade unions and contracts of employment
- Health and safety issues. eg. Duty of employer to employee.

#### Physics

- Health and safety issues:
  - Radioactive e sources
  - Electricity
  - Sound levels
  - Lasers in industry or medicine

#### PE

- Health and safety considerations in all physical activities and when using apparatus.

#### **4. Develop awareness of the extent and diversity of local and national employment opportunities.**

#### Maths

- Consideration of careers linked to topics within Mathematics syllabus.

## History

- Career opportunities for History students are explored:
- Research, teaching, business, archivists, diplomats etc.

## Geography

- Division of labour types across the UK are studied through case studies.
- Industrialisation and deindustrialisation across the globe.

## ICT

- Research can be carried out regarding employment opportunities/university courses in ICT and computing.

## Biology

- Careers in NHS other than doctor/nurse are discussed after PowerPoint presentations.

## Art

- Discussed when considering AS/A Level options
- Students aware of possibilities for employment with Art & Design and its combination with other subjects.

## Physics

- Various physics related careers are discussed periodically. eg. Medical technician, engineers, nuclear industry technicians, astrophysicists, geophysicists.

## PE

- Career paths in physical education discussed, broken down into four areas:
  - Exercise and sport science
  - Sport and leisure studies
  - Professional studies
  - Exercise prescription and management

## **5. Relate their own abilities, attributes and achievements to career intentions and make informed choices based on an understanding of the alternatives.**

## Maths

- Careful consideration is given to the students' suitability for AS/A2 and university courses.
- Skills are linked to careers throughout all Key Stages.

## History

- Skills needed for various careers using history are discussed and considered.

## English

- We stress the need for clear English in all work.
- Writing types often related to work documents. eg. Council reports, business and charity letters.

## Geography

- Opportunities for employment from education including teaching, city, practical use of subject in conjunction with other disciplines are discussed.

## Biology

- Encouraged to visit university websites
- Informal discussions relating to related careers (Parents' Evening)
- Suitability for AS/A2 considered

## Art

- Students asked to review strengths/weaknesses and to relate their skills to future career opportunities.

## 6. Undertake tasks and activities set in work contexts.

### Maths

- MAI tasks – practical context in mathematical problems

### English

- Media units from Schemes of Work
- Mock Trials
- Debates

### Electronics

- Electronics project work at GCSE and AS

### ICT

- Coursework tasks simulate real working environments
- Students adopt role of systems analyst to solve the needs of a particular user.

### Biology

- Local politics – “Fluoride Debate”, students take different roles.
- Brewing, baking, cheese and yoghurt making
- Routine hospital work – urinalysis

### RE

- Responsibility for own learning
- Independent research
- Meeting deadlines
- Making presentations

### Art

- Use of skills, techniques which are used in work:
  - Design
  - Drawing
  - Computer graphics

### Business Studies

- Various exercises regarding business.

### Chemistry

- Risk assessments for practical work.

## 7. Learn from contact with personnel from different employment sectors.

#### English

- Plan to invite in journalists/editors for media projects.

#### ICT

- Relationships with local firms using large computer networks to be widened.

#### ART

- Visits from working artists specialising in particular skills, e.g. painting, printing.
- This is an area for development in Art and Design Scheme of Work.

#### Business Studies

- Work visits
- Visiting speakers

#### Physics

- Proposed visit to Fort Halstead.

#### PE

- Visits from professional coaches in variety of sports.

### **8. Have experience (direct or indirect) of working practices and environments.**

#### Maths

- Working to deadlines for coursework.

#### English

- Magazine project in KS4.

#### Geography

- Consideration of formal and informal sectors of employment and exploitation of cheap (sometimes illegal) labour in developing countries.

#### Chemistry

- Work experience GSK
- Young Scientist days

#### Electronics

- Relevant educational visits

#### ICT

- Topics covered with actual working practices and environments used as examples, including:
  - Hardware/software issues
  - Verification/validation
  - Website design, uses etc.
  - Databases/spreadsheets
  - Banking systems
  - Supermarkets

## Biology

- Health & Safety, risk assessments

## Art

- Skills and techniques used will all be relevant to future work in this area.

## Business Studies

- Work visits

## PE

- Practical skills/techniques relevant to future work in this area.
- Health/Safety, risk assessment

## **9. Engage with ideas, challenges and applications from the business world.**

### Maths

- MA1 tasks – real life situations presented in context of problems
- Practical activities e.g. trigonometry
- Stocks and shares
- Interest – fiscal responsibilities

### Geography

- Farming systems and the farmer as a decision taker
- Location of retail and other businesses
- Concept of profit and cost/benefit analysis

### Electronics

- Choice of most economic components in a project circuit

### ICT

- Coursework tasks directly related to real problems from business world
- Modelling exercise – mobile phone company

### Biology

- Pros and cons of transplants
- Pilot studies and hypothesis forming – coursework
- Energy/conservation of finite resources

### RE

- Ethical issues
- Responsibility for environment, poverty .....

### Art

- Practical consideration of artistic issues
- Gallery visits to keep up with latest ideas

### Business Studies

- GCSE course centres on all aspects of the business world

## Departments responding to the 9 elements

1. Maths, History, English, Geography, Chemistry, ICT, Electronics, Biology, RE, Art, PE, Physics, Business Studies (15)
2. English, Geography, Chemistry, Biology, Art (5)
3. Maths, English, Geography, Electronics, ICT, Biology, RE, Art, Business Studies, Physics, PE (11)
4. Maths, History, Geography, ICT, Biology, Art, Physics, PE (8)
5. Maths, History, English, Geography, Biology, Art (6)
6. Maths, English, Electronics, ICT, Biology, RE, Art, Business Studies, Chemistry (9)
7. English, ICT, Art, Business Studies, Physics, RE (6)
8. Maths, English, Geography, Chemistry, Electronics, ICT, Biology, Art, Business Studies, PE (10)
9. Maths, Geography, Electronics, ICT, Biology, RE, Art, Business Studies (8)

## 18. PSHE Policy

*This policy is included as it stands, but will shortly be completely revised.*

### 18.1 Aims

18.1.1 The aims of **PHSE** within Skinners reflect the School Aims described in the school Development Plan, particularly;

- To promote a sense of moral and spiritual awareness, which may become an abiding help to each boy in his personal conduct.
- To prepare boys to become active, well-informed and considerate citizens in society,
- To aid all boys to meet the challenges of adult **life-**

18.1.2 The aims of our **PHSE** are clearly defined:

- To develop Skills including:
- the ability to take responsibility for one's own learning
- the ability to communicate effectively
- the ability to make informed and responsible decisions
- the development of a positive self image
- the development of appropriate study skills
- the ability to build relationships of trust amongst pupils and with their teachers.

To promote Values including:

- respecting the feelings, attitudes, rights and property of others
- truthfulness, keeping promises, caring for others, both in School and in the wider community
- self discipline
- good sportsmanship, cooperative and team spirit
- sound moral and family **values-**

To impart Knowledge including:

- that identified in the National Curriculum cross **curricular** themes of Economic and Industrial awareness, Citizenship, Health Education, Environmental Education and Careers Education
- an awareness of the role of the School in the community and an awareness of individual opportunities and responsibilities for service
- Full and relevant Careers Guidance, including interview experience, work experience and help in formulating a curriculum **vitae**.

## 18.2 Objectives

18.2.1 Each of the themes and topics covered in the PHSE curriculum works within these aims and has its own specific and stated objectives. Examples are given later in the PHSE Handbook,

18.2.2 Related Policies also have objectives which are described within each policy.

## 18.3 Outcomes

18.3.1 Curriculum Provision

Y7	One lesson every two weeks	<b>KAH RLB RJS</b>
Y8	One lesson every two weeks	<b>JSS</b>
Y9	One lesson every two weeks	<b>KAH RLB RJS</b>
Y10	Four mornings a year (12 lessons)	KAH, CF + VISITORS
<b>Y11</b>	Two mornings a year (6 lessons)	KAH + VISITORS
Y12	Civics	MFT .

Curriculum Content follows the Cross **Curricular** themes listed in the aims.

18.3.2 PHSE is delivered by a small team of staff, led by the PHSE **Co-ordinator**. The latter is responsible for the development, preparation, planning and evaluation of the curriculum. He has received training and advice from PHSE consultants. Many external visitors are invited to participate in the PHSE programme, including School Nurses, Police Liaison Officers, Counsellors and Health Promotion Officers.

18.3.3 PHSE has been the vehicle for the development of several related policies:

- Sex Education
- Equal Opportunities
- Behaviour, including a Bullying Survey

- Drug Education and dealing with drug related incidents.

18.3.4 Students experience a wide range of teaching and learning methods, including; class discussion, role playing, written work, class discussion, small group work, videos, brainstorming.

18.3.5 Parents are kept fully informed of developments and are consulted frequently. For example:

A Parent Liaison Group meets with staff to discuss developments.

Parent evenings connected with a PHSE theme are held annually.

All parents were sent a questionnaire asking for content suggestions for the PHSE curriculum.

A summary of the bullying survey and the behaviour policy were sent to all parents.

18.3.6 **Evaluation of PHSE** depends on the nature of the theme:

Knowledge gained is assessed by quizzes and worksheets, eg. effects of alcohol.

Changes in attitude are assessed to some extent by teacher and visitor observation of student behaviour and also Questionnaires (eg. Bullying). Pupils also review their own progress.

Development of skills by the student and enhancement of their self esteem is difficult to quantify, but teachers observe their progress and discuss this with the students.

We hope that many of the skills, attitudes and information students acquire through our PHSE programme will be of use to them long after they have left our school.

Evaluation of the curriculum content and teaching and learning methods are carried out by other staff. Tutors are asked to comment on teaching material and invited to attend lessons.

Visiting speakers produce aims, objectives and evaluation sheets. Visitors are accompanied by school staff most of the time. They are asked to read our Sex Education policy where appropriate (eg. School Nurse).

18.3.7 A PHSE Development Plan is in place.

## 19 Educational Visits

19.1 Skinners' School does not believe that the curriculum offered to our pupils can or should be confined to the school site, nor should it take place solely between 8.45am and 3.35pm. We do not underestimate the importance of educational visits and actively encourage departments to provide such opportunities. Field work, exchanges, visits to the site of historical events, study trips, tournaments, art trips, expeditions, walks, lectures, theatre trips and very many other activities are an essential part of the experience we wish to offer each pupil at Skinners'.

## 19.2 **Regulations involving School Educational Visits and their management**

### **Introduction**

- 19.2.1 The School has every wish to encourage extra-curricular activity and visits by pupils to places of interest. It also recognises the value of the many holidays which members of staff arrange and which have, by tradition, been heavily supported by both pupils and parents. The School is also aware of the very considerable responsibilities staff incur when visits of this kind are organised. When things go wrong, the position of the School can become difficult. For this reason, the procedures set out here need to be followed by all staff.
- 19.2.2 Visits and journeys taking place during term time must be of definite educational value and normally linked with the work of the School. Visits which are predominantly of a holiday nature must be confined to School holiday periods, though they may be permitted in special circumstances to extend not more than two days into term time.
- 19.2.3 These regulations apply to all school organised visits except those involving class activities in the immediate neighbourhood of the School or participation in organised sporting events.
- 19.2.4 A checklist for staff organising visits is included at the end of these Regulations. It is suggested that the checklist should be used for every visit. Copies are available from the reception.

### **19.3. Permission to organise a visit**

- 19.3.1 No visit may be advertised to pupils or parents until agreement to its taking place has been obtained, if the visit is to take place during lesson time, from the Deputy Headmaster, who will consider the date(s) involved; and the Headmaster. A 'School Visit' form, supplies of which are kept in reception, should be used.

### **19.4. Finance**

- 19.4.1 The Education Reform Act (1988) which sets out the rules relating to charging, divides visits into two categories.
- 19.4.2 For visits defined as 'during School hours' parents may be charged only for lodging and accommodation. It is School policy that they are requested to make a contribution towards travelling expenses but no pupil may be excluded because of his parents' unwillingness to do so. Parents must be told this by letter and they must also be informed that, if insufficient funding is forthcoming, the visit may have to be cancelled.
- 19.4.3 For the visits which involve lodging and accommodation, the School is required to advise parents that anyone in receipt of Family Credit or Income Support is entitled to claim remission.
- 19.4.4 For visits defined as 'outside School hours' the full cost of each pupil's involvement may be recovered from parents unless the education provided fulfils a requirement

specified in the syllabus of a prescribed public examination or statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum.

19.4.5 For visits in either category staff expenses may not be charged to parents. However, if an agency or coach company allocates a number of free staff places, this is acceptable. Parents may be invited to make a voluntary payment towards staff costs.

19.4.6 Visits not related to public examinations or the National Curriculum and taking place outside School hours e.g. a Theatre visit, are regarded as optional extras. Here charges may not exceed the cost of providing the activity divided equally by the number of pupils wishing to participate. The costs can include elements for travel, board, materials, entrance fees, insurance and staffing, where the member of staff is engaged on a separate contract to provide the service.

19.4.7 Receipts must be issued for all payments received. An account must be opened through the Bursar. Into this all money received must be paid and from it payments required will be made.

## **19.5. Adult Supervision**

19.5.1 Suitable arrangements must be made for pupils to be supervised by adults (i.e. persons aged 19 or over), at least half of whom must belong to the School's teaching staff. The figures given in this section are to be regarded as the minimum requirement; the special circumstances of a particular visit may make a greater number desirable.

19.5.2 For visits lasting longer than one day, two adults will be required for a party not exceeding twenty pupils and, for a larger party, two adults for the first twenty pupils plus one additional adult for each additional fifteen pupils or fewer. If the party includes girls from another school, then one of the adults should be a female.

19.5.3 For visits of one day or less, two adults will be required for a party not exceeding thirty pupils and, for a larger party, two adults for the first twenty pupils plus one additional adult for each additional twenty pupils or fewer

19.5.4 If it is felt that any variation in the minimum figures given above might be acceptable (e.g. where all the pupils are sixth-formers), then the agreement of the Headmaster must be sought. This might, in the case of sixth-formers, include dispensing with all adult supervision. If this were to happen the written agreement of parents must be obtained.

19.5.5 In every case one of the supervising adults should be nominated as responsible for the first aid kit and for summoning medical assistance, where necessary.

## **19.6. Insurance and Transport**

19.6.1 The School has all necessary insurance to protect itself, its employees and any other adults acting in a supervisory capacity from any liability arising from an approved School visit.

- 19.6.2 If a special 'risk' can be identified, this must be discussed with the Bursar at the planning stage to ensure that it falls within our umbrella cover or if other provisions are needed.
- 19.6.3 Where a booking is made through an agency, insurance must be taken out to cover the funds invested.
- 19.6.4 For all overseas visits details of the insurance cover provided must be sent to the parents of all participating pupils.
- 19.6.5 If a privately-owned vehicle is to be used in connection with a School visit, each driver is personally responsible for ensuring that he/she is adequately insured to use the vehicle for that purpose. The written agreement of the insurance company concerned must be obtained. The School will not accept responsibility for students travelling in the cars of other students.
- 19.6.6 If a hired 'self-drive' vehicle is to be used, the company insuring the vehicle must be asked to provide a written guarantee that appropriate insurance cover exists for the purpose for which the vehicle is to be used.
- 19.6.7 If a minibus is to be used, the driver must have pass the Kent County Driving Test.

#### **19.7. Communication with Parents**

- 19.7.1 When approval has been given for a visit to take place, a letter should be sent to parents. It should include as much detail as possible about the visit, as well as all the items mentioned in paragraph 7 of the checklist (see below). The letter should also indicate whether any deposit payable is returnable and when any further payments will have to be made. The letter must be cleared with the Headmaster.
- 19.7.2 Insurance details should be given to parents at an early stage in the planning of the visit.
- 19.7.3 In the case of an extended visit, shortly before the date of departure parents should be issued with an information sheet. Details provided should include the address and telephone number at which the party may be contacted and, in the case of an overseas visit, the address and telephone number of the organising agency (if there is one). The times of departure and return should also be given.
- 19.7.4 Where pupils are to leave a coach either on the way to or at School, it should be established with parents where this will be and it should be made clear that staff responsibility will cease when the pupil leaves the coach at the agreed place.
- 19.7.5 A briefing meeting for parents is recommended in the case of extended visits.
- 19.7.6 Authority should be obtained from parents to approve such medical treatment as is deemed necessary in an emergency or on the advice of a qualified medical practitioner. Details of any existing medical condition and the treatment required should also be obtained.

19.7.7 For any extended visit a telephone number at which parents may be contacted at any time during the visit is required. A list of these numbers should be given to a contact in the Tunbridge Wells area and to the Headmaster.

## **19.8. During the Visit**

19.8.1 If there is an obvious hazard (e.g. skiing, moving about on rocks near dangerous currents), staff must be with pupils at all time.

19.8.2 In the absence of such a hazard, pupils may be allowed to go about unsupervised provided:

- i) That they are in groups of not fewer than three;
- ii) That each pupil has an identity card bearing his name and details of where he is staying;
- iii) That, where appropriate (e.g. in a city), each pupil has a map of the location;
- iv) That in the initial letter of information about the visit, parents have been made aware that the above arrangements will obtain and have signed an agreement to this effect;
- v) That such unsupervised activity will not last for more than three hours at any one time
- vi) That pupils should be aware of what to do in order to contact staff as soon as practicable.

19.8.3 Unless the steps described in 4.82 (i)-(vi) have been taken, the pupils must be supervised at all times.

19.8.4 Teachers in charge of parties must emphasise the need for good behaviour at all times. Smoking and drinking by pupils of all ages should be banned. During travel there should be a 'counting of heads' at all appropriate times, e.g. after a boat trip and before the coach leaves. Bathing parties require special supervision and parents' permission for bathing should have been obtained. It is not acceptable for any pupils to bathe without supervision. For day visits in School (or partly in School time) full uniform must be worn. The only exception is a field course, or something similar, when it is necessary to wear suitable clothing.

19.8.5 Staff may be asked to look after pocket money. In this event boys should be advised that no responsibility can be taken. Where individual passports are used, staff could well insist on the boys using travellers' cheques which can, of course, be looked after by staff.

## **19.9. Checklist for staff organising visits**

19.9.1 This list includes some points not included in the above Regulations. Unless they are clearly advisory (e.g. para. 24), they are to be regarded as part of the Regulations governing School visits.

## CHECKLIST FOR STAFF ORGANISING VISITS

(To be used in conjunction with the Regulations concerning School visits).

Items marked with a \* **MUST** be carried out for the type of visit to which they apply.

- 1.\* All staff must be aware of the requirements of the Education Reform Act as it relates to charging for trips but letters to parents on this issue must first be cleared with the Headmaster.
- 2.\* All staff must read the Regulations concerning School visits.
- 3.\* Cost visit (including accommodation and food, entrance fees, transport, insurance, collective passport): overestimate to allow for unexpected increased or expenses.
- 4.\* Clear the visit with the Deputy Headmaster and Headmaster by using a 'School Visit' form (to be found in the staffroom). In the case of all overseas visits and visits involving at least one night's absence from home, this form must reach the Deputy Headmaster by no later than the end of the second week of the term preceding the term in which the visit is to take place.
5. Make provisional bookings. If an agency is used for an overseas visit it must be an ABTA company.
- 6.\* First information to parents. Any booking form to be signed by parents should include a statement of 'indemnification' with, where appropriate, specific reference to pupils going about unaccompanied or bathing during the visit. A special clause (wording available on request) must be included if the visit is to industrial premises. The information to parents should include the closing date for bookings and, where appropriate, notification that it may be necessary to limit numbers and/or increase the cost. It should also be made clear that the School has the right to refuse to take a pupil on a School visit. For visits taking place 'in School hours', appropriate wording re charging must be included.
- 7.\* Receipts must be issued to pupils for money collected. Receipt books are available from the office.
- 8.\* An account must be opened with the Bursar into which all money must be paid and from which all payments will be made. Slips for making payments into and from the School Development Fund are available from the office.
9. When the number of pupils is known, staff should be enrolled, at least sufficient to conform to the Regulations. Any variation to the minimum figures stated in the Regulations must be cleared with the Headmaster.
- 10.\* A list of pupils intending to participate in a visit of more than one day should be given to the Deputy Headmaster. He will clear the list with the Heads of Year and, if the list includes any pupil who, for reasons of discipline, should not be taken, he will inform the Teacher i/c accordingly.
- 11,\* Anyone intending to use a privately-owned or hired self-drive vehicle must consult 18.6.6 or 18.6.7 of the Regulations.
- 12.\* Insurance – the teacher i/c should check with the Bursar that the visit will be covered by the School's insurance.

13. The Deputy Headmaster will give a copy of the 'School Visit' form to the Bursar in advance of the trip taking place.
14. Firm bookings to be made.
15. Collective passport application (British only). Are boys'/staff's individual passports still valid? Does anyone need to obtain a visa?
16. For visits to EC countries, a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) is required by each party member. This gives entitlement to medical treatment in the country to be visited. The form may be obtained from a main Post Office or online at: [www.ehic.org.uk](http://www.ehic.org.uk).
17. Special party concessions (if any) to be applied for.
18. Where appropriate, inform School (at least three weeks before visit) of the number of pupils who would normally have School lunch.
19. If pupils will miss any lessons, list to be posted on notice board of Staffroom at least one week before visit.
20. Maps of areas to be visited.
21. Foreign currency.
22. Plastic bags (for travel sickness, litter etc) - obtainable from any supermarket.
23. First Aid kit (member of staff to be in/c) – obtainable from the School Office. For every visit a member of staff must be identified as responsible for the First Aid kit and for summoning medical assistance, where necessary.
24. Reminder to coach firm – with details of pick-up points and times and, in the case of overseas trips, telephone number of the organising agency.
25. Final payment from parents.
26. Account from agency.
27. Programme for trip (e.g. order of visits in case of extended overseas trip).
28. 'Identity Cards' for boys. Essential on overseas trips, these should show the boy's name and the address and telephone number of the overseas centre.
- 29.\* Meeting of staff involved to agree on allocation of duties and rules for trip.
- 30.\* Information sheet for boys.
- 31.\* Information sheet for parents (including address and telephone number of agency – if there is one – in case of overseas trip).
- 32.\* Information sheet for staff (including list of whole part as well as group for which responsible).
33. Briefing meeting for parents.

- 34.\* Briefing meeting for boys.
- 35.\* ALL VISITS INVOLVING ONE NIGHT OR MORE AWAY: LIST OF TELEPHONE NUMBERS WHERE PARENTS CAN BE CONTACTED – COPY TOA MEMBER OF STAFF OR OTHER RESPONSIBLE ADULT IN TUNBRIDGE WELLS AREA AND TO HM.
- 36.\* Cash to be carried by Teacher i/c on trip in case of emergency.
- 37. Account from coach firm.
- 38.\* Statement of account for the visit to the Bursar.

### **Skidders' Study Leave Policy**

It is the responsibility of the students to know where and when their examinations will be held. They must be prepared to enter the examination room at the 10 minutes before the time published by the school (not the times from the examination boards).

We see Study Leave as an essential component of individual and personalized preparation for public examinations. For Study Leave to be effective students must be allowed time at home to prepare for examinations but this is not at the expense of teaching or revision in school. The correct amount of time devoted to Study Leave is therefore crucial and this policy is borne out of experience and represents what we feel is the ideal balance.

#### **Block Study Leave**

This will be provided for Years 11, 12 and 13 in the summer. The date of the start of block Study Leave will be decided annually and will take into consideration that season's examination timetable. Block Study Leave will also be provided for **YEAR 13 ONLY** for January modules. Again the timing of this will vary with examination timetables.

#### **Study Leave for Modules outside of the block Study Leave (AS and A-Level)**

Years 12 and 13 will be allowed to take the day off prior to an examination timetabled for the next morning. **This does not mean study leave on Fridays for Monday exams.** For afternoon modules they may take that morning as Study Leave.

Students who have taken a morning examination must return to their lessons after the exam unless they have a further exam in the afternoon or one the next day.

#### **Study Leave for GCSE modules outside of block Study Leave**

Years 10 and 11 may take the morning as Study Leave for afternoon modules. No other Study Leave is sanctioned for GCSE modules except where the modules represent a considerable element of the overall assessment (RE, Statistics). For these two exceptions students may take the day off prior to the examination.

For all Study Leave, students may study independently in the school library or Sixth Form study room.

Finally, Study Leave is a privilege and may be rescinded if study in school is deemed to be a more appropriate preparation for individual students.