

GTS CURRICULUM 2019 – 2020

OUR ETHOS

At GTS, our aim is to ensure that all pupils are able to make outstanding progress in their learning and personal development in their 5 years with us. We will evaluate each cohort as they join GTS and based on the academic profile and pastoral information, we will determine the best learning pathway for all the pupils.

CURRICULUM INTENT

The GTS curriculum will give pupils the academic knowledge, vocational skills and emotional literacy to pursue their dreams.

Through the curriculum and wider opportunities at GTS, we intend to:

- Provide pupils with rich knowledge, skills and deep conceptual understanding of the world, so that pupils can take advantage of the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.
- Ensure pupils are highly literate, numerate and creative.
- Ensure disadvantaged pupils have a curriculum that enables them to make progress in line with their peers.
- Grow aspirations.
- Ensure our pupils become life-long learners by promoting their happiness and both physical and mental health.

THE FOUNDATIONS CURRICULUM: - YEARS 7 - 8



The year 7 and 8 curriculum is known as the 'Foundations' curriculum. This curriculum is designed very carefully to ensure a smooth transition to secondary school and then onwards into GCSE subjects. By the end of the Foundation years, learners will have developed four key learning skills:

Knowledge – Understanding, recalling and applying key aspects of the curriculum.

Independence – Having the skills and motivation to learn alone, including meeting deadlines for work.

Effort – Embracing challenge and persevering in the difficult task of learning.

Accomplishment– Displaying behaviour for learning, relating to others, and completing work in a professional way. **Pupils will develop the “Ethic of Excellence”**

These skills will be taught, developed and reported on in all of their subjects.

The Foundations curriculum is made up of both 'linear' subjects, which pupils study all year and 'challenge' subjects, which pupils study for one term, before moving on to another challenge.

The challenges are designed to give pupils quality time to explore new learning, experiment with ideas and develop multiple skills whilst they work towards a set outcome. It also allows GTS to deliver the full suite of national curriculum subjects without narrowing pupil's choices as well as looking beyond the constraints of a more traditional curriculum.

The challenges are named after each faculty. In year 7 the challenges contain the following content.

Solutions: Pupils will complete a series of challenges using knowledge and skills developed through outdoor learning, physical and human geography in and around the local environment.

Expressions: Pupils will create a Live Art Installation and gallery experience based around the story and themes from 'The Wizard of Oz.' The performance will include a trial of Oscar Diggs in which members of the audience form the jury.

Connections: Pupils will create a range of nutritious food and technological products based on the theme of minimising the human impact on our surroundings and the Earth's finite resources. The evaluation will include predictions for the future.

The challenges for year 8 are still under construction to be ready to be taught from September 2020 and will build on the existing knowledge/structures whilst becoming more focused on the explicit demands of the national curriculums for Science and History.

The 'linear' subjects that the pupils will study are English, Maths, MFL (Modern Foreign Languages), PE, IT, PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic) and The Big History Project'. The Big History Project is a project rooted in providing pupils with a deep conceptual understanding of the universe. Initially designed by the Bill Gates foundation, GTS has adapted its resources to enable us to deliver this rich learning experience to pupils at GTS. Pupils will begin their learning 13.8 billion years ago and through careful investigation will track the development of the universe up to the present day and beyond, giving rise to important questions about the future of planet earth. We want our pupils to be able to truly understand their place in the origins of the planet and humankind so that they can contribute fully to the future direction of the world and benefit the generations to come.

HOW ARE THE CHALLENGES DELIVERED?

Challenge subjects will provide 12 periods over the two-week timetable, this is taught in sessions of 100 minutes. This significant amount of time will allow learners to dig deeply into subjects that interest them and allow them time to reach meaningful and significant outcomes. Two teachers will work with the learners for six periods each. Each Challenge will last one term. When learners start a new challenge, they will have a different pair of teachers working with them. The Big History Project allows for 14 periods over the two-week timetable. Again, this investment in time will allow learners to dig deeply into this fascinating project. The project will last for the whole year and will be delivered by a team of two teachers.

HOW WILL I KNOW MY CHILD IS MAKING PROGRESS?

Each of the four skills will be reported on in all of their subject areas. Independence, Effort and Accomplishment are graded on a 4-point scale. 1 Excellent, 2 Good, 3 Coasting, 4 Cause for concern.

Knowledge will be assessed as a percentage grade. More details of this will be published with the reports.

IS THIS CURRICULUM DIFFERENT TO PREVIOUS YEARS?

The staff at Great Torrington School continually evaluate and reflect on the way lessons are delivered. After six years of running our previous curriculum model (GTS Leaners BaccaLaureate) we have taken some steps to improve and develop. We always ensure our curriculum offer is in line with current educational thinking and our own findings relating to pupil progress. Ofsted have, this year, published new curriculum guidance and these developments fully complement this.

FOUNDATION CURRICULUM ALLOWANCE: YEARS 7 – 8

NB: Lessons are predominantly taught in 100-minute double lessons.

Subject	Number of lessons per fortnight	
	YEAR 7	YEAR 8
English	6	8
Mathematics	6	6
Big History Project	14	
Science		8
Technology		2
History		4
Food		2
Geography		4
FBI (Faith Belief & Ideas)		2
3R's (Roles Relationships & Responsibilities)	2	3
Art & Design		2
Drama		2
Music		2
Modern Foreign Languages	6	5
Information Technology	4	
Physical Education	6	6
Challenge Subjects	12	
Literacy & Numeracy catch-up (if required)	(4)	(4)
House Time	2	2
Enrichment & Intervention	2	2

KEY STAGE 4 CURRICULUM: - YEARS 9 - 11



At GTS, Key Stage 4 (KS4) is taught over Years 9, 10 and 11. The aim of the KS4 curriculum is to give the pupils the best possible chance of attaining up to 9 GCSE, or equivalent, passes. The number of qualifications entered will be dependent on the pupil's learning pathway. All pupils will study four option subjects. The pupils will also study all of the core subjects of English, Mathematics, Science, 3Rs (PSHE) and practical PE. The latter two are not examined.

At GTS, we will ensure that all pupils will continue to study the courses that are most appropriate to their learning needs and will develop a curriculum to meet the needs of the new GCSEs and other changes in national education policy, without losing sight of our pupils needs. Pupils are encouraged to follow the English Baccalaureate¹ if this is the correct pathway for them, thus ensuring that they have the best possible foundation for applying to college and university.

The new GCSE English Language, GCSE English Literature and GCSE Mathematics are fully embedded in all three year groups; the first examinations for these were in June 2017. All pupils are being taught the new Science GCSEs; either Combined Science (Trilogy) or GCSE Chemistry, GCSE Biology and GCSE Physics (Triple Award). GCSE mathematics and science are tiered examinations. This means that pupils will be entered for the higher (9-4) or foundation (5-1) papers. These subjects are taught in ability groups. All option subjects are taught in mixed ability groups based upon the pupils' subject choices.

Triple science GCSEs at GTS are an option choice. This has proven to be very popular with the pupils and will give them more time to study all three sciences. All other pupils will follow the GCSE Combined Science (Trilogy). The Combined Science is equivalent to two GCSEs but does cover aspects of all three Sciences; Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

All GCSEs now being taught are the new GCSEs. All other subjects taught and examined will be DfE approved 'high value' vocational qualifications. The majority of subjects that are studied at GTS are full course, meaning that they are equivalent to one GCSE. The only exception being the GCSE Combined Science which is equivalent to two GCSE passes. We do enter some pupils for Cambridge Nationals, WJEC/EDUQAS and RSL courses if it is appropriate to their learning needs and post-16 learning pathway. These are all equivalent to one GCSE. Some pupils are further supported by Entry Level (below GCSE level) and Functional Skills qualifications (at Level 1, equivalent to a GCSE grade 1-3); these are accepted by FE Colleges and are suitable for the learning and future needs of the pupil.

GTS does include the possibility of participating in work based learning in Years 10 and 11; this has proven very successful for a number of pupils who have gone on to apprenticeships at the same employer. We are very proud of our links with local employers.

² The 'golden standard' of the English Baccalaureate comprises of GCSEs in English language and Literature, Mathematics, Science, Geography or History and a Modern Foreign Language

³The 'Progress 8' measure will be the predominate progress measure which will comprise of the average score achieved from the pupils best eight GCSEs in English and Mathematics, three other Ebacc subjects¹, and three other 'high value' qualifications which could also be Ebacc subjects (the pupils Attainment 8) compared to the pupil's predicted Attainment 8 score, based on their Key Stage 2 test results.

CURRICULUM SUBJECT ALLOWANCE: KS4

NB: Lessons are predominantly taught in 100-minute double periods.

	Number of lessons per fortnight		
	YEAR 9	YEAR 10	YEAR 11
English	10	10	10
Mathematics	10	10	10
Science	10	10	10
Option 1	5	5	5
Option 2	5	5	5
Option 3	5	5	5
Option 4	5	5	5
3R's (Roles Relationships & Responsibilities)	2	2	2
Physical Education	4	4	4
House time	2	2	2
Enrichment & Intervention	2	2	2

HOW DO I SUPPORT MY CHILD?

During the Foundation years and beyond, learners will be asked to complete regular homework tasks. There is an expectation that pupils read for a minimum of 20 minutes each day at home, either on their own or to an adult, a mixture of both is ideal. On occasions staff might also set some challenge specific home learning tasks. This will be minimal but will be set using show my homework. Please help your child to be organised and ensure that this system is checked regularly and this homework is completed.

MY CHILD HAS A LEARNING DIFFICULTY, HOW WILL THEIR NEEDS BE MET?

The Foundation curriculum is based around engaging topics so children of all abilities will want to learn. By having fewer teachers and more time in one class, staff will be able to build a deeper understanding of each child's individual needs and be able to address them. Because of the open-ended nature of the projects there will be no compulsion for learners to consistently move onto the next thing until they have truly mastered what they are working on. This will give us time to ensure key skills are embedded.

All pupils receive support during the Guided Choices process. Those pupils who have an EHCP will meet with the INCO and their parent/carer to look at what pathway would be most suitable to meet their needs. We have prepared individual pathways for some pupils, ensuring that they make the best progress possible.

Staff work in close liaison with Helen Whiterod (INCO) to understand how to meet the needs of all of our learners. Throughout pupil's needs are identified and met through the GTS Individual Needs Framework which works in alignment with the Devon Graduated Response Framework.

POLICY STATEMENT ON SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN)

All teachers are teachers of special educational needs. It is the teacher's responsibility to meet the needs of all children in their class through their classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style and differentiation in line with the SEND 2014 Code of Practice Policy.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE FOR SEN

Our guiding principle is one of inclusion. We want to identify and break down possible barriers to learning.

In making provision for pupils with SEND we:

- Value all our pupils equally and are committed to enable them to experience success.
- Ensure that all pupils have equal access to a broad, balanced curriculum which is differentiated to meet individual needs and abilities.
- Recognise that it is the responsibility of all teachers to identify and meet the SEND of pupils. SEND crosses all curriculum areas and all aspects of teaching and learning.
- Recognise that high quality teaching and learning is good practice for all pupils.
- Recognise that any pupil may encounter difficulties in school at some stage.
- Acknowledge that all special educational provision is more effective if pupils and parents are fully involved. As a result, we will seek the views of parents and pupils.

Further details of the manner in which these principles are achieved can be found in the school's Special Educational Needs policy document.

DROP EVERYTHING AND READ (DEAR) – READ ALOUD

Four afternoon sessions of 20 minutes are dedicated to DEAR/ Read Aloud. Literacy is a key focus at GTS and this time promotes: reading for pleasure; the development of vocabulary; access to curriculum/ exams; improvements in reading age; and encourage pupils to read a broader range of texts.

MY CHILD IS A HIGH ACHIEVER, HOW WILL THEY CONTINUE MAKING RAPID PROGRESS?

Gifted children thrive most when they are accelerated through the curriculum or given time to delve deeply into one aspect of a subject. The open ended design of the new curriculum is tailored to allow for these two types of learning. Learners will pursue their own enquiries or independently develop skills until they reach substantial and significant conclusions.

High achieving pupils make good progress at GTS. All teachers know who their high achievers are and they ensure their lessons are planned with enough challenge and depth for every child. A wide range of enrichment activities are offered, from University visits to national athletics competitions, choirs to robot programming - all to enable high achievers to thrive in their chosen field.

These are identified using a number of criteria: academic attainment and aptitude, outstanding ability and performance (e.g. sport, music, drama) and teacher input. Once identified, pupils are encouraged to stretch and further their gift or talent through a variety of activities and opportunities.

ENRICHMENT AND INTERVENTION

Every pupil at GTS has one period of Enrichment and Intervention a week and completes three 12 week courses a year of enrichment activities. This gives our pupils unique opportunities within North Devon to participate in a range of activities ranging from: STEM Awards (science, technology, engineering and mathematics), Media Studies, Chess, sports academies (for football, rugby, cricket & netball), community art projects, enterprise schemes, Greek mythology, theatre productions, leadership awards and a range of languages including Latin, Italian and Cultural Studies. All pupils get to opt for their enrichment activities for the next academic year in the summer.

All activities are taught in mixed year groups except the sports academies which are key stage specific. This allows our pupils to unite over a common interest and to develop friendships across year groups.

Many of the enrichment activities are certified through national award schemes that will enhance not only the pupils' CVs but, most importantly, gives our pupils an opportunity to excel and express their skills and abilities, beyond what the curriculum allows, whether they progress to following an apprenticeship or an Oxbridge degree.

Pupils in years 7, 10 and 11 will also be eligible for intervention in 12 weeks blocks, if they have been identified as not making expected progress in their GCSEs in English or Mathematics.



THE 3RS (RELATIONSHIPS, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES)

PSHE, or 3Rs as we like to call it, is part of the school programme for all pupils. It is delivered to each year group (7 – 11) by a dedicated and enthusiastic team following well-developed schemes of work. Links with the wider community are embraced and encouraged. Regular visitors and guest speakers deliver specific areas of the course offering a wealth of experience to equip our pupils with the skills to be empowered and forward-thinking individuals.

The school places a strong emphasis on the proper consideration of moral and social issues as well as health, drugs, relationship and sex education and citizenship (all age appropriate). If parents have any questions about the content of 3Rs lessons then in the first instance they can contact Simon Robilliard, Head of Foundations.

The school prides itself in responding to emerging issues within society – last year alone we have discussed immigration, terrorism, knife crime, gender identity and anti-social behaviour. We are proud to address these areas and to be there for our pupils.

The following areas are covered by the 3Rs:

PHSE: This includes drugs and alcohol education, emotional health and well-being, sex and relationships (with an emphasis on healthy relationships), nutrition and physical activity, personal finance, safety, careers education and work related/enterprise learning.

Citizenship: Learning about your rights and responsibilities, the law, justice and democracy. Encouraging respect for different national, religious and ethnic identities and our role as a UK citizen, exploring the Fundamental British Values (FBV).

Right of withdrawal: the right of withdrawal from RSE (Relationship and Sex Education) stands for all parents and teachers.

CAREERS EDUCATION AND GUIDANCE



The school works closely with Careers South West and Peninsula Training Ltd who, together with the school's own experienced personnel, aim to provide the very best careers education and guidance for our pupils.

Since January 2018 it has become a legal requirement for all schools to provide Careers Guidance and access to education and training providers. The DfE has set these requirements against the 8 'Gatsby Benchmarks' which must be fully in place by 2020.

These Benchmarks are;

1. A stable careers programme
2. Learning from career and labour market information
3. Addressing the needs of each pupil
4. Linking curriculum learning to careers
5. Encounters with employers and employees
6. Experiences of workplaces
7. Encounters with further and higher education
8. Personal guidance

Careers Education helps young people to develop the knowledge, confidence and skills that they need to make well-informed, thought-through choices and plans that enable them to progress smoothly into further learning and work, now and in the future.

At Key Stages 3 and 4, careers education is delivered within the 3Rs, house time and embedded within the wider curriculum.

GTS is guided by the GATSBY benchmarking in order to ensure our delivery is deep and meaningful in every area.

HOUSE TIME

House Time takes place weekly and is the time when pupils can work with other pupils in different year groups within their vertical tutor group. These 40 minutes a week allow pupils to be mentored by their tutor or co-tutor and is a time for pupils to engage in literacy and numeracy activities alongside inter-house competitions, aspects of 3Rs curriculum, careers guidance and other relevant or current topics as they arise.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP



Collective worship is about a school's duty to develop pupils spiritually, morally, socially and culturally. This may include learning about interesting cultural traditions and their meaning, listening to stories with a moral message and reflecting on themes such as strength, courage or loyalty. Collective worship should draw pupils' attention to the values the school wishes to develop both as a body and in each individual. Collective worship is about the growth of the person, their character and social outlook, whatever their

academic aptitudes.

All pupils have assembly once a week as a house and meet in their tutor groups every morning for 15 minutes. This is time for the pupils to reflect and share suitable materials connected to collective worship.

Right of withdrawal: the right of withdrawal from collective worship stands for all parents and teachers.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

At GTS we teach RE as 'Faith Beliefs and Ideas'. In our foundation years, we base our curriculum upon the Devon and Torbay Agreed Syllabus for RE 2019-2024. FBI is additionally covered in house time, 3Rs and in assemblies. Pupils can opt to follow a full course GCSE in RE at Key Stage 4.

Right of withdrawal: the right of withdrawal from RE or any part of the RE curriculum stands for all parents and teachers.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES

Additional to our Enrichment and Intervention provision, Great Torrington School has a breadth of activities which are available for pupils at lunch-time, after school and beyond. GTS believes that provision should go way beyond the taught curriculum as it is instrumental in building; character, values, relationships with peers and staff alike; as well as providing opportunities to build interests and passions that could last a life time.



Activities and events are developed in response to pupil requests/interests and identified gaps in the curriculum or community provision. Outdoor learning focuses on making the most of the local environment through surfing, orienteering, Duke of Edinburgh and Ten Tors. Events are often produced jointly with pupils, employers and community groups. Great Torrington's Got Talent, Summer and Christmas concerts, GTS Film Premiere, Junior Sports Leader programmes, Rotary Club competitions such as Young Chef, Young Musician, Photographer and Writer of the Year and of course the Youth Speaks debating competitions, are all fine examples of what is on offer across the board.

In addition, a wide range of sport, music, drama, art, dance, science, language and geography activities/clubs are available. The library is open for pupils both before and after school and can be used for the completion of home learning. There is an active reading club with reading mentors every day of the week before school and during registration.

There are numerous trips covering a broad range of activities: outdoor pursuits in water sports in the Ardeche, the Ultimate Adventure Centre in Bideford and skiing in Italy. There are also History visits to the battlefields and Krakow, Geography field trips, language trips to France, Drama trips to London and even as far afield as New York! Pupils are able to follow the Duke of Edinburgh award at Bronze and Silver level.

Each term details are published with the upcoming extra-curricular activities.

IMPACT

The impact of the taught curriculum is measured through attainment in public examinations and associated Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). In order to maximise progress for all pupils the outcomes will be analysed at an individual, class, subject and cohort level, which allows adjustments to future planning and implementation.

Equal significance is shown when assessing the impact of the extra-curricular provision on the pupil's overall well-being, aspirations, engagement and wider development into a young adult. However, measuring this impact on social and emotional development is not as easily achieved; though factors like attendance, behaviour, contribution to the community and involvement in wider provisions is monitored.