



Curriculum Policy

2026 - 2027

Ownership & Consultation	
Document sponsors (role)	CEO / Director of Education/Director of EYFS
Document authors (name)	Melissa McBride David McCarthy Vanessa Temple Holly McKenna (From September 2023)

Version control	
Implementation date	September 2020
Reviewed and updated	September 2021
Reviewed and updated	September 2022
Reviewed and updated	April 2023
Reviewed with new EYFS statutory guidance	August 2023
Reviewed and updated	April 2024
Reviewed and updated	August 2024
Reviewed and updated	August 2025
Reviewed and updated	July 2026 - Effective 6th July 2026

CURRICULUM POLICY

1 Introduction

1.1 Sophia High School is a British Online School for children between the ages of 4 to 18 (some students may be older than this due to additional learning needs/ EHCPs), offering the full English National Curriculum from Reception to KS5, Esports (level 1 - 2), AQA unit Awards, selected Open University courses, -Pearson IGCSE and IA Levels and other courses from other exams boards (AQA).

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that our curriculum supports our school ethos and fulfils our school aims, which are defined as:

- Ensuring Sophia High School is a happy school. This happiness is built into the culture of the school. It comes from the unusual amount of individual attention we choose to give our students and the importance we place on family values and listening to our students, staff and in working together with our parents in an important partnership to get the best outcomes for our students.
- Aiming to 'Ignite a Passion for Learning' & 'Inspire Every Child' through the delivery of a broad, balanced curriculum designed for the future, which challenges and inspires students to love learning and to shape a better world. Paramount to this is the importance we place on the mental health and wellbeing of our students.
- Provide a holistic future skills curriculum that helps students develop intellectually, emotionally, socially, physically, morally and aesthetically as global citizens. Our curriculum also ensures students develop a core awareness of digital technologies and how to use them ethically and effectively to support learning in the digital age.
- Balancing academic achievement, character development and the nurturing of a global perspective through our approach to Project Based Learning (PBL). We aim to offer a curriculum which stirs the imagination, fosters creativity, develops students' critical thinking and inquiry skills and provides our students with the skills required for Human Flourishing (and success in 2030 and beyond).
- Our goal is to enrich the student experience by providing exceptional learning throughout their educational journey. We embrace change, develop creative competencies in our students, strengthen our community and connect to the world beyond.
- Cater for the needs of individual students whom it admits to the school, whatever their gender, ethnic, cultural, religious or social background, or academic ability
- Build on students' prior experiences, skills, knowledge and understanding using a phase not age based approach and pedagogy that enables individualisation and teach where they learn pedagogy to be activated in classrooms so students are supported throughout their journey through reflective practice.
- Identifying individual potential and nurturing it so that all of our children can make the very most of themselves. Through our passion for personal development, global citizenship and opening the doors for our students to connect to our global learning community, we inspire confidence and develop self-esteem as we prepare them to be

successful in their next stage of learning as we help them grow from the learners of today to the leaders of tomorrow.

- Ensure students experience and demonstrate continuous progress and achievement
- Recognise the crucial role which parents play in their children's education when learning online, and encourage strong parental involvement in the educational process
- Sophia High School children learn that their own success in life comes through hard work, self-discipline and inner strength – and we teach them how to develop and harness those characteristics. They are taught that happiness comes from the pursuit of success rather than the trappings of it and that they can spread that happiness through respect, tolerance, good manners, honesty, compassion and fair-mindedness. And they learn that personal fulfilment depends on maturity, confidence and independence of thought.

Equality and Diversity: Curriculum Principles

All children will be respected and their individuality and potential recognised, valued and nurtured. Activities and the use of digital technologies offer children opportunities to develop free from prejudice and discrimination, and encouraged to enjoy and learn from them equally.

Our aim is to show respectful awareness of all major events in the lives of children within our school and in society as a whole. Appropriate opportunities will be given to children to explore, acknowledge and value similarities and differences between themselves and others.

We will provide positive opportunities for all students, those with additional needs (EHCPs, SEMH, physical, medical etc.), where necessary making reasonable adjustments to put them on a level footing with students without disabilities or identified learning challenges.

We will carry out accessibility planning aimed at increasing the extent to which disabled students can participate in the curriculum, improving assistive technologies in our digital classroom to enable disabled students to take better advantage of education, benefits, digital environment and services provided, and improve the availability of information to disabled students.

Through the curriculum, all students should:

- Learn to be adaptable, solve problems in a variety of situations, and work independently as well as members of a team
- Develop the ability to make reasoned judgments and choices, based on interpretation and evaluation of relevant information from a variety of sources
- Be enthusiastic and eager to learn
- Develop a set of moral values, such as honesty, integrity, sincerity, personal responsibility, global citizenship and ethical and effective use of disruptive technologies
- Learn to become responsible for their own actions
- Care for and take pride in the school and communities of which they are a part
- Develop tolerance, respect and appreciation of the feelings and capabilities of others
- Develop non-discriminatory attitudes
- Know how to think and solve problems mathematically, using concepts – among others - of number, measurement, shape and space

- Be able to listen and read and communicate accurately and appropriately through speech and writing, for a variety of purposes
- Develop sound scientific knowledge and an enquiring mind in their approach to scientific problems
- Be able to solve problems using technological skills and develop strong technical skills for the future
- Be capable of communicating their knowledge and feelings through various art forms including art/craft, music, drama, and acquire appropriate techniques to enable them to develop their inventiveness and creativity
- Acquire knowledge of geography, history and society, and the skills associated with these subjects, at local, national and international levels
- Develop agility and coordination in and through physical movement, and personal team skills through participation in sport
- Know the basic principles of health, hygiene and safety, and how to apply them
- Be prepared for the challenges and opportunities of life after school, in the context of further education as well as longer term career opportunities, and in their wider existences as part of our careers and entrepreneurship programme.

1.2 This policy applies to all pupils from ages 4 to 18 (or older in some circumstances).

1.3 We see the curriculum as, 'The total learning experience for our pupils, which includes not only the taught lessons but also the routines, behaviours, events, activities and other opportunities beyond the curriculum that our pupils experience on a daily, weekly and yearly basis in order to ensure that all of them make the best progress possible and attain high standards'.

1.4 A well-structured and coherent curriculum is a fundamental element of the tripartite of education that underpins all successful schools and includes Teaching, Learning and Assessment as in the following model:



Delivered within the context of
the school's agreed aims

1.5 We aim to provide a curriculum to develop pupils who love learning. We understand that the curriculum, both within taught lessons and beyond them, and in everything we say and do, should create an environment where academic risk-taking, questioning and debating, challenging thinking and the freedom to learn from mistakes are all encouraged. Digital pedagogy is at the heart of how we develop learning and we aim to ensure that students emerge as confident individuals who use technologies safely, effectively, respectfully and ethically.

1.6 Our curriculum offers all pupils the opportunity to experience linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, aesthetic and creative aspects of education. We intend that our curriculum should imbue in our pupils:

- A passion for life-long learning;
- A capacity for independent and critical thinking;
- Knowledge of disruptive technologies and their ethical use
- The skills and capacities for global citizens inline with the SDGs
- Self-awareness, self-regulation and resilience;
- Self-confidence without arrogance; and
- Genuine interests that extend beyond the confines of the classroom.

1.7 British values, which are; democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs, are actively promoted in every aspect of school life.

1.8 Our curriculum is compliant with the following regulatory requirements as outlined in the Online Education Accreditation Scheme and ISI Inspectorate standards;

The written policy, plans and schemes of work:

- (i) take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHC plan; and*
- (ii) do not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.*

For the purposes of paragraph the matters are:

- (a) full-time supervised education for pupils of compulsory school age (construed in accordance with section 8 of the Education Act (1996), which gives pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education;*
 - (b) that pupils acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills;*
 - (c) personal, social, health and economic education which:*
 - a. reflects the school's aim and ethos; and*
 - b. encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act(a);*
 - (d) for pupils receiving secondary education, access to accurate, up-to-date careers guidance that–*
 - a. is presented in an impartial manner;*
 - b. enables them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options; and*
 - c. helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential. The school has a separate careers guidance policy.*
- i. where the school has pupils below compulsory school age, a programme of activities which is appropriate to their educational needs in relation to personal, social, emotional and physical development and communication and language skills;*
- ii. that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress and*

iii.effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.

1.9 The Key Stage specific Programmes of Study objectives and phase Learning Goals are the foundation of the English National Curriculum, including EYFS, and define what children are expected to know, what they should be able to do, and the understandings they will develop in their academic, personal and international learning at the end of each phase of study. These learning goals guide learning and teaching and help to focus assessment.

Education for Sustainable Development

Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESD and GCED) runs through all we do. Access to the Sustainable Development Goals for all children at an appropriate level is important as we see our students as leaders of the future.

ESD supports SDG 4.7 that “by 2030 ensure all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development.” (U.N., 2015)

This is based around development of knowledge, competencies, values and skills.

The ESD Competencies that we focus on are:

- Systems competency - thinking about how systems interact with each other
- Anticipatory competency - anticipating the future by understanding and evaluating current information
- Normative competency - reflecting on themselves, their values and norms
- Strategic competency - being able to think strategically and develop strategies for action
- Collaboration competency - collaborate with others and develop engagement strategies
- Critical Thinking competency - the ability to question the norms associated with daily life practices and develop actions for the future
- Integrative Problem Solving competency - connecting information and developing strategies to inform daily life in the context of ESD
- Self Awareness competency - reflecting on self, actions, beliefs, values in the context of ESD

The Delors Report (Delors Commission, 1996) highlights the four Pillars of Education:

- Learning to know
- Learning to do
- Learning to be
- Learning to live together

ESD adds a further Pillar to this:

- Learning to transform oneself and society

By using active learning techniques, our students become increasingly aware of the world around them, its wonders and complexities, and how to begin their journey as sustainably responsible global citizens.

McKinsey Deltas

The world of education and work is changing swiftly and dramatically with the emergence of new technologies. McKinsey Global Institute research shows that all citizens will benefit from having a set of foundational skills that help them fulfil the following three criteria, no matter the sector in which they work or their occupation:

- add value beyond what can be done by automated systems and intelligent machines
- operate in a digital environment
- continually adapt to new ways of working and new occupations

There are four identified broad skill categories:

- Cognitive
- Digital
- Interpersonal
- Self-leadership

These are categorised into 13 identified separate skill groups belonging to those categories.

Cognitive		Interpersonal	
Critical thinking ● Structured problem solving ● Logical reasoning ● Understanding biases ● Seeking relevant information	Planning and ways of working ● Work-plan development ● Time management and prioritization ● Agile thinking	Mobilizing systems ● Role modeling ● Win-win negotiations ● Crafting an inspiring vision ● Organizational awareness	Developing relationships ● Empathy ● Inspiring trust ● Humility ● Sociability
Communication ● Storytelling and public speaking ● Asking the right questions ● Synthesizing messages ● Active listening	Mental flexibility ● Creativity and imagination ● Translating knowledge to different contexts ● Adopting a different perspective ● Adaptability ● Ability to learn	Teamwork effectiveness ● Fostering inclusiveness ● Motivating different personalities ● Resolving conflicts ● Collaboration ● Coaching ● Empowering	

Self-leadership	Digital
Self-awareness and self-management ● Understanding own emotions and triggers ● Self-control and regulation ● Understanding own strengths ● Integrity ● Self-motivation and wellness ● Self-confidence	Digital fluency and citizenship ● Digital literacy ● Digital learning ● Digital collaboration ● Digital ethics
Entrepreneurship ● Courage and risk-taking ● Driving change and innovation ● Energy, passion, and optimism ● Breaking orthodoxies	Software use and development ● Programming literacy ● Data analysis and statistics ● Computational and algorithmic thinking
Goals achievement ● Ownership and decisiveness ● Achievement orientation ● Grit and persistence ● Coping with uncertainty ● Self-development	Understanding digital systems ● Data literacy ● Smart systems ● Cybersecurity literacy ● Tech translation and enablement

There are 56 distinct elements of talent (DELTAs) that fall within these skills groups. These are called DELTAs, rather than skills, because they are a mix of skills and attitudes.

This research helps define the particular skills citizens are likely to require in the future world of work and suggest how proficiency in them can influence work-related outcomes, namely employment, income, and job satisfaction. Given the weak correlation between proficiency in self-leadership and interpersonal DELTAs and higher levels of education, a strong curricula focus on these soft skills may be appropriate.

SHS is committed to developing the DELTAs with all students to support learning and working in the 21st Century.

2 The Early Years Foundation Stage / Foundation Programme

The Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework, including EY Profile, is a scheme of work which continues until the end of the Reception Year.

Early Years are an integral part of the wider learning community at Sophia High School, and as such the vision for the youngest learners, and their teachers remains consistent with the wider cohort of students within our online school community.

The underlying principle is that teaching and learning in the Early Years should be developed using the Statutory Framework for EYFS. This framework sets the standards that early year's providers must meet to ensure children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It also seeks to provide: consistency and quality; a secure foundation; partnerships between practitioners and parents; equity of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practices; ensuring every child is included and supported; and meets safeguarding and welfare requirements.

SHS acknowledges that all children should have a comprehensive and holistic education, accessed from home, whilst still having a supportive social structure and maintaining a small group dynamic.

SHS Online Learning for EYFS is a holistic early years programme taught in English, closely aligned with the EYFS (UK statutory guidance) and taught through stand-alone subject lessons in English and Maths, and Project Based Learning for wider subjects. Families access from home, fully supported by a dedicated SHS team with significant experience teaching EY pupils.

3. Delivery of the Digital Curriculum

We do not expect our online students to have a full 8-hour day online. The Live Lessons and support activities tasks/challenges and daily practice add up to a significant amount of this time combined. Each lesson is 50/50: Live Lesson and Independent Work. This is not 'Home Learning', it is a part of the online lesson. On top of this, it is the choice of individual families how much work they complete outside the Live Lessons, but regular practice of reading, phonics and mathematics is required for a child to progress according to expected standards in these key areas.

All work in the Live Lessons and subsequent activities lead to the EYFS (UK) expected standards at the end of Reception, the Early Learning Goals, and expected learning outcomes at the end of each Unit. From KS1 through to KS5, students work towards the key stage objectives covered in the NC Programmes of Study, following a stage not aged based approach which is individualised to the unique learning needs and experiences of learners.

The NC delivers objectives in a key stage based approach which aligns to our development of the curriculum. This means students can be taught where they learn and enable both support and challenge to be individualised rather than simply teach at age related expectations for a particular year group

This enables us to deliver a spiral based curriculum that moves across the school across each key stage, with the prior learning of objectives being built upon at each stage and for students to develop deep mastery of knowledge skills understanding and application across a number of years, rather than an age related delivery of the curriculum.

Observations of learning and success are recorded in the Digital NoteBooks and tracked by teachers using our school MIS system and attainment and progress is evidenced across both standardised and formative assessments and reflective planning.

The EYFS profile is a statutory, summative assessment of children's development at the end of the EYFS and must be carried out in the final term of the year in which a child reaches age 5, and no later than 30 June in that term.

Teachers are expected to use their professional judgement to make assessments, based on their knowledge and understanding of what the child knows, understands, and can do. Thorough and continuous observations and formative assessments of what children have learnt will inform teaching and learning on an ongoing basis throughout the final year of the EYFS (Reception) and at the end of each key stage, culminating in IGCSEs at the end of KS4 and International A-Levels at the end of KS5. This will include identifying areas where children may be at risk of falling behind, so that teachers can provide timely and effective support.

It is intended to provide a reliable, valid and accurate assessment of each child's development at the end of the EYFS. It is made up of an assessment of the child's outcomes in relation to the 17 Early Learning Goal (ELG) descriptors.

4 Taught Curriculum: EY to KS5

4.1 Our taught curriculum broadly follows and, at times, goes beyond the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance (EYFS) and National Curriculum at KS1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. Reception children are formally assessed at the beginning and end of the school year in which the child turns five years old and throughout via teacher observations and in-class assessments for the English and Maths programmes. Students in Years 2-10 are formally assessed using externally standardised GL Assessments for English, Maths, Science, the CAT4, which measures potential and the PASS survey (Pupil Attitudes to Self and School). In addition, regular in-class teacher assessment ensures the teacher has a reliable overview of progress.

The National Curriculum for England and Wales outlines the framework for education in these regions, specifying what students are expected to learn at various stages of their schooling. It provides a structured progression of knowledge and skills that students are expected to acquire, ensuring a consistent and balanced education across the country. The programmes of study are written as a two year phase of study and our curriculum aligns to this mandate.

At post-16, our KS5 programme follows the International A Level study courses through both EdExcel and wider exam boards (course specific) and are designed as an academic foundation required for higher education study. In addition KS5 students have full pastoral support, careers and university guidance and are encouraged to take up a full part in our enrichment and student leadership programme.

Key Stages and Age Groups

The curriculum is divided into Key Stages (KS), each corresponding to specific age groups:

1. **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS):** Birth to age 5 (up to the end of the Reception year in primary school).
2. **Key Stage 1 (KS1):** Ages 5-7
3. **Lower Key Stage 2 (LKS2):** Ages 7-9
4. **Upper Key Stage 2 (UKS2):** Ages 9-11
5. **Key Stage 3 (KS3):** Ages 11-14
6. **Key Stage 4 (KS4):** Ages 14-16
7. **Key Stage 5 (KS5):** Ages 16-18, also known as Sixth Form (Note: Key Stage 5 is not part of the National Curriculum, but schools often follow standardised guidelines and qualifications).

As above, the school delivers the National Curriculum in key stage phases (e.g. UKS2 covers Years 5 and 6 as a combined band). The DfE does not prescribe year-by-year sequencing within a key stage; schools have professional discretion over ordering and pacing. Statutory coverage is assessed against the phase as a whole, not individual year group expectations. This is covered in parent workshops.

Subjects and Core Areas

Core subjects that are mandatory throughout the key stages include:

- **English**
- **Mathematics**
- **Science**

Foundation subjects include:

- Art and Design
- Computing
- Design and Technology
- Geography
- History
- Music
- Physical Education (PE)
- Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) (required at KS2 and KS3);

The Primary curriculum integrates the very best components of the National Curriculum and Project Based Learning (PBL), enabling children in EY to Upper Key Stage 3 to become ambitious, confident and inspired learners, and to approach learning with a clear focus on the progression of skills. The curriculum covers a wide range of subjects, helping children learn to make meaningful connections among them.

Children study English, Maths and Science, as well as co curriculum coverage of Geography, History, Art, Computing, Music, Design Technology and Innovation, International, Health and Wellbeing through PBL lessons as well as discrete subject specialist teaching in PE, Computer Science, Esports and French. As with FP, for time allocation and work expectation, each lesson is 50/50: Live Lesson and independent work.

At KS3, students study English, Maths and Science, following the National Curriculum, as well as learning through a series of PBL units of work. Each unit of work has a theme that today's students find interesting and relevant. Students learn many of their subjects through this one common theme, such as drama, music, art, geography, history, global citizenship, innovation and health and wellbeing. Linking subjects means that students can make connections in their learning. The more connections the brain can make, the better a student can learn.

Using the KS3 programmes of study across the three year cycle enables the curriculum themes to be adjusted each academic year to meet the needs of the cohort and the spiral approach to the delivery of objectives enables students to develop a deep mastery of subject areas; each block adding to the foundation set by prior years. The focus across the phase is to build foundational readiness for KS4 through initial mastery recap of Upper Key Stage 2 objectives through to work within the GCSE KS4 strands as students commence the third year of the KS3 programme of study.

At KS4, students are assessed by IGCSEs. Students at Sophia High School sit IGCSEs in four core subjects, English Literature, English Language, Maths (Foundation or Higher) and Science (Double or

Triple Award). In addition to these core subjects, pupils are able to study one further IGCSE option subject chosen from a selection based on student interests, skills and passions. The remainder of our curriculum offering is made up of the school's own courses which include Digital Game, Esports, Design, PSHE and Wellbeing. As of September 2026 the School will introduce BTEC Level 2 Esports to run alongside our core IGCSE options.

At KS5, students are assessed by IALs and may choose from a range of options including BTEC Level 3 Esports for U.K. based learners, and iBTEC Level 3 Esport which we are excited to introduce from September 2026.

On Fridays, students are able to select from a range of Enrichment subjects, such as Forensics, Spanish, Debate Club and many more. This enables students to pursue individual interests as well as developing skills beyond those explored in the core and foundation subjects. Students also have the opportunity to work towards AQA Unit Level Awards.

4.2 During the first term at Sophia High School, students take part in baseline and CAT4 assessments, which are then repeated once every 2 years. The outcomes of these tests are shared with pupils and parents as part of informed discussions about a pupil's potential. They are used to make sure that the curriculum offer is individualised to need.

4.3 Time awarded to each subject in each year group is visually explained in the curriculum model in Appendix 1.

4.4 The curriculum is translated into subject long term plans and our School schemes of work (SoW) and Reflective Lesson Plans with internal formative and summative assessments throughout the year. Curriculum Maps are provided to parents at the start of each half term to share the focus areas for the next term of learning. As student cohorts change each year, the curriculum can therefore be adapted around learning pod interests and learning needs, whilst maintaining objective coverage for the appropriate phase of learning mapped to the phase programme of study objectives.

We communicate this to parents in the following ways:

- At the start of each academic year, families receive written Curriculum Overviews prior to each half term, Curriculum Maps are shared and posted in our MIS. New families attend a New Family Induction and a Curriculum Overview Workshop in September
- These set out the school's phase-based delivery model, the curriculum sequence for the year, and how progress is tracked and reported
- Parents are directed to the school's Athena MIS for live timetable and lesson record data

4.5 Taken together, the taught curriculum will ensure that by the time they have completed their time with us, all pupils are able to demonstrate the knowledge, skills and understanding to enable them to move onto the next stage of their education at the highest level. Baseline assessments start at the beginning of each academic year and run for the first half term of learning. At the end of each academic year, transition planning by staff and consolidation sessions support learners with readiness to move to the next phase of study.

4.6 All children's learning will undergo formative assessment throughout the year and data will be recorded and analysed by the Senior Leadership and ALN Team, and discussed with staff and shared in the Google Sophia High School shared drive. Progress data is shared with parents through termly reports and via the Athena parent portal. Where a student's progress raises concern, the class teacher or Director of Education will make contact proactively.

Parents may request a progress meeting at any point via staff calendars available in our Parent Dashboard.

Curriculum Guides are available for:

- Primary
- Secondary
- IGCSE
- A-Level

In addition, parent workshops are held at the start of each academic year for new families to explain the model of delivery and our approach to the curriculum. This is further supported by Curriculum Overview workshops for all families held in September each academic year.

5 Alternative Provision and Additional Learning Needs

5.1 Our curriculum is inclusive. We support children with a range of challenges, both social and educational, and employ an experienced Director of Alternative Provision and Inclusive Learning along with a team of Additional Learning Needs specialist teachers to work with children, families and staff to ensure we best meet the needs of these children.

5.2 Alternative Provision students enrolled at Sophia come under the remit of the Director of Alternative Provision and Inclusive Learning, including the ALN Team. We work closely with the commissioning Local Authority, school, family and student as they join the SHS cohort, developing a personal plan as they begin to meet staff and join lessons.

We enrol children who are recognised by their LEA/School for ALN, and the Director of Alternative Provision and Inclusive Learning works with the ALN team, within the framework provided to ensure the needs of these children are being met according to LEA expectations.

We recognise that some children are more-able and the ALN Team also works to ensure that these children are supported across all areas of learning and development.

However, if we believe that any child cannot access the curriculum, we would strongly advise that their child be taught in a more specialised school, that has experience dealing with children with specific challenges.

5.3 Further details of this provision can be found in our Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion Policy.

6 SMSC

6.1 Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development (SMSC) is the overarching umbrella that encompasses personal development across the whole curriculum. Our policy follows the advice given by the DfE in the non-statutory guidance of November 2014 and meets the requirements of the Independent School Standards.

Aspects of SMSC are infused within the day to day operation of our school; incorporated through the curriculum, both in content included in subject schemes of work and through other planned learning opportunities in the school. They are captured in our written aims and expressed in the ethos and behaviours of everyone. All students follow an age-appropriate PSHE based daily micro-learning programme called Holistic Horizons which is built on the statutory PSHE curriculum alongside elements of the SDGs. Student meet with their form daily and also have the opportunity to engage 1-1 with staff through our mentoring programme.

Our approach to SMSC ensures that principles are actively promoted which:

- Enable pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence;
- Enable pupils to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England;
- Encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality in which the school is situated and to society more widely;
- Enable pupils to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England;
- Further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures;
- Encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act; and
- Encourage respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic process, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England.

6.2 Discriminatory or extremist opinions or behaviours are challenged as a matter of routine.

6.3 In addition, our approach to SMSC ensures that all pupils will gain an:

- Understanding of how citizens can influence decision-making through the democratic process;
- Appreciation that living under the rule of law protects individual citizens and is essential for their well-being and safety;
- Understanding that there is a separation of power between the executive and the judiciary, and that while some public bodies such as the police and the army can be held to account through Parliament, others, such as the courts, maintain independence;
- Understanding that the freedom to hold other faiths and beliefs is protected in law;
- Acceptance that people having different faiths or beliefs to oneself (or having none) should be accepted and tolerated, and should not be the cause of prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour; and

- Understanding of the importance of identifying and combating discrimination.

7 PSHE (PSED Early Years / Foundation Programme)

7.1 Our PSHE programme, Holistic Horizons, delivered through our age-appropriate daily micro-learning lessons, build on the statutory PSHE curriculum alongside elements of the SDGs. and ESD goals, encourages respect for other people, with particular regard to the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010

7.2 In addition to these discrete sessions, PSHE is also dealt with across the curriculum (e.g. Social issues through the teaching of English; Health through Biology and PE; Citizenship through History in the PBL and PBL curriculum as well as International Studies through the lens of Global Citizenship. There are also centrally organised sessions which supplement the delivery in house, dealing with issues such as bullying, alcohol, sexual relationships and drugs, as well as supporting careers and economic education.

7.3 The knowledge, skills and values discussed and developed in this programme directly correlate with expectations for ESD socio-emotional learning:

- Managing emotions
- Empathy
- Problem solving
- Making responsible decisions
- Maintaining healthy relationships

8 Enrichment

8.1 A wide range of enrichment activities supplements the timetabled curriculum. Our enrichment programme brings subject specialists as ‘residents’ to support many diverse areas including, Drama, Music, Computing, Careers and 3D Game Development. Enrichment options are timetabled on Friday of each week and students are enrolled in one or more enrichment classes. Each term the students will be enrolled into different enrichment courses.

8.2 The core curriculum at Sophia High school runs in our timetable generally from Monday/Thursday inclusive, leaving Friday as a day where students will join a selection of the enrichment courses, house activities and student leadership opportunities on offer. These extend interests, nurture talents and provide an insight into career pathways. This aligns to the new U.K. National Curriculum mandate set by the DFE with regards to enrichment to commence in 2028.

8.3 Early Years children are set daily Tasks (expected) and Challenges (extension) to complete at home. This includes creative projects and motor skills challenges. Work is recorded in the Digital Notebook and also during the Live Lessons for feedback and encouragement from both teachers and peers.

9 Responsibility

9.1 The people with responsibility for the overview and yearly evaluation of this policy is the Leadership Team, who holds joint responsibility for the delivery of the curriculum. However, all staff are responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented and acted on

9.2 When evaluating the use and impact of this policy, the Leadership Team will evaluate the extent to which there is evidence of a curriculum which:

- Fulfils the aims of the school;
- Embeds aspiration, attributes and the expectation to achieve high standards and high rates of progress; and
- Provides engagement and excitement for learning.

10 Curriculum Development Review

10.1 Parents are warmly invited to schedule meetings with our subject teachers or Heads of Department who make their weekly appointment schedule available within our Athena MIS Parent Dashboard. This is a direct route for parents to raise curriculum questions first with the class teacher or subject lead where questions arise.

The subject curriculum is regularly reviewed within faculties to ensure that it is up to date and effectively delivered. Subject leaders meet together to address programme-wide development such as academic honesty, information literacy and research skills. Our Director of Learning and Human Flourishing has oversight of the curriculum policy delivery on a day to day basis and the Director of Education holds overall responsibility for curriculum quality and is available for concerns not resolved at teacher level or SLT level. the school will consider any curriculum-specific concern as part of its own quality assurance cycle regardless of whether a formal complaint is lodged

10.2 The subject curriculum is regularly reviewed within faculties to ensure that it is up to date and effectively delivered. Subject leaders meet together to address programme-wide development such as academic honesty, information literacy and research skills.

10.3 The Director of Learning and Human Flourishing (Appointed as of 1st September 2026) has oversight of the curriculum policy delivery on a day to day basis and the Director of Education holds overall responsibility for curriculum quality and is available for concerns not resolved at teacher level or SLT level. The school will consider any curriculum-specific concern as part of its own quality assurance cycle regardless of whether a formal complaint is lodged

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Equality and Diversity Policy and the Teaching and Learning Policy

Appendix 1: Time awarded to each subject in each year group (subject to change in accordance with needs of the school - please refer to your child's timetable on our Athena MIS.

2026 - 2027

Primary School	Subject	Number of Lessons
Foundation Programme Max 30 minute lessons	English and Phonics	4
	Maths	4
	Activity PBL	4
	PSHE (Holistic Horizons)	5 (20 minutes)
KS2 35-40 minute lessons All lessons are 50/50 live lesson and independent work set	English and Reading	4
	Maths	4
	Science (part of PBL)	1
	PBL	4
	PSHE (Holistic Horizons)	5 (20 minutes)
	French	1
	PE	1
Senior School	Subject	Number of Lessons
KS3 Max 40 minute lessons All lessons are 50/50 live lesson and independent work set	English	4
	Maths	4
	PBL	4
	Science	4
	French	2
	Computer Science	1
	PSHE (Holistic Horizons)	5 (20 minutes)
	Mental Wellbeing	1
KS4 40-50 minute lessons All lessons are 50/50 live lesson and independent work set	English Language	3
	English Literature	2
	Maths	4
	Double Award Science	6
	Option iGCSE	3
	PSHE (Holistic Horizons)	5 (20 minutes)
	Other subjects on request	
KS5 50-70 minute lessons	Subjects on request	