

Next Steps (Key Stage 4)

In December of Year 9, students begin the process of choosing their Key Stage 4 courses. A comprehensive, impartial guidance system supports students in selecting suitable courses.

Students continue with their “core” curriculum of English, Maths, Science, CPRE and PE and then choose at least four additional courses.

Courses offered within school include traditional GCSEs, the Btec qualification and some non-examination courses. Some students will consider applied learning opportunities and courses with a more vocational content.

Next Steps (Post-16)

Although some students begin work or undertake a vocational course at a Further Education College post-16, our Sixth Form is vibrant and exciting and remains an increasingly popular choice for the majority of our students. A comprehensive, impartial guidance system, throughout Year 11, supports students in selecting suitable destination for post-16 study or work.

Within the Sixth Form, students can follow a one-year Btec course or can opt for the more tradition A Level route. Whichever route they follow, all students can expect excellent pastoral support and guidance as they prepare for life, work and study post-18.

We hope you find this short guide useful. Further enquiries about the curriculum should be made to Elaine Boyd on e_boyd@sandyupper.beds.sch.uk or by telephoning the school on **01767 680598**.

Our website www.sandyupper.net has areas for each department where you can find out more about particular subjects.



Sandy Upper School 2010



A Brief Guide to the Curriculum for Students and Families



Our Curriculum

We want our students to study appropriate and challenging courses that prepare them for life and work in contemporary society. Increasingly students will have opportunities for early accreditation in some of their courses so that they can progress at the pace most appropriate to them.

In Year 9, students follow these courses:-

Subject	Contact Hours (per fortnight)	Setting Arrangements
English	6	Ability
Mathematics	6	Ability
Science	6	Ability
CPRE (Citizenship, Personal and Religious Education)	3	Taught in Maths sets
PE	4	Dependent on activity
Art	2	Mixed form, mixed ability
Drama	2	Taught in MFL groupings
Music	2	Mixed form, mixed ability
Geography	3	Taught in MFL groupings
History	3	Taught in MFL groupings
French *	3	Broad ability groups
German or Spanish (2nd Language) or Learning to Learn*	4	Language choice and ability
Design Technology	4	Mixed form, mixed ability
ICT	2	Mixed form, mixed ability

* A small group of students may be "disapplied" from the study of a modern foreign language to enable them to focus on study support.

Setting and Grouping Arrangements

The table above shows how students are organised into teaching groups for each subject.

1. "Ability" setting—data from previous tests and information from Middle Schools is used to place students in groups with those closest to their ability to help them work at the appropriate pace. In languages this ability grouping is quite broad to accommodate language choices.
2. "Form Group" - for some subjects, students are taught entirely with their pastoral form group.

3. "Mixed form, mixed ability" - some subjects require a lot of equipment or are extremely practical in nature. For these subjects, students are grouped in slightly smaller, mixed ability, mixed form group classes.
4. "Language Choice" - all students are asked to state a preference for the second language they will study before they join the school. In the majority of cases we are able to accommodate this. Using Middle School information, some students are recommended to focus on French as a single language which is then supplemented by a course of Learning to Learn.

Our timetable is organised into two "bands" and students remain with students on their particular band throughout Year 9. When moving to Year 10, it is occasionally necessary to move a student from one band to the other in order to make sure they receive the curriculum they have requested.

Assessment

Students' work is formally assessed regularly and current working levels are reported to parents and carers. Feedback from teaching staff and peers can also be seen in exercise books. Comments about how to make progress are recorded in the target section of the student planner.

As a result of the data collected, students may change teaching groups to ensure their learning needs are met. Parents/carers will be informed of changes by letter.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Teaching and learning in the school day is supported and enhanced by a comprehensive programme of curriculum enhancing activities. These are important because they help students to develop their skills, make friends and widen their experience of the world around them.

Accreditation

In Year 9, all students are working towards accreditation in ICT and many will be in a position to gain the Btec First Award at the end of this year.