



RADLEY

**Curriculum, Teaching
and Learning Policy**
including Fundamental British Values

November 2023

Curriculum

The aim of the curriculum at Radley is to provide boys with a stimulating and broad education. We want to exceed the expectations of Preparatory schools and parents, and the value added data at GCSE demonstrates that boys are indeed challenged and encouraged to develop their potential. The end results – average of c.92% A*-B at A-level over the last five years, and well in excess of 80% 9-7 at GCSE – place Radley among the top academic schools nationally.

Excellence is achieved by first inculcating a strong work ethic; boys are trained to work on their own and to aim to do all prep thoroughly. Secondly, teaching dons are trained and motivated to teach excellently, and are led by Heads of Department ambitious to improve their department teams and results each year (see Teaching Policy below). Thirdly, we have developed a strong Academic Support Department (see Academic Support Policy) whereby all boys are diagnostically tested on entry and all who are deemed to need help and support from the AS team have sessions outside and inside timetabled lessons to ensure their particular difficulties are addressed. Fourthly, we set boys carefully according to ability in some subjects where we feel it is appropriate. Some subjects will have more mixed sets. Maths, English, Science and Languages differentiate as precisely as possible according to need. Movement within these sets will occur over an academic year.

The **curriculum** has been constructed to ensure that when boys arrive at Radley at 13, they receive a broad and balanced education. They will in all likelihood have not encountered a second or third modern language; many will have had an uneven experience of Design Engineering and Electronics; some will need understanding of Maths or Science addressing; and some will not have had curricular music.

So this Shell year (Y9) is deliberately broad and our two week cycle enables a large number of subjects to have exposure in the Shell Curriculum. Strong emphasis is placed on English and on mathematical skills, but all three sciences (Chemistry, Physics and Biology) are taught, as are the Humanities - History and Geography - and Design Engineering, Art and Music each have timetabled periods to develop boys' creativity. Shells are not required to study French (though most do) and therefore it is no longer compulsory at GCSE. They elect to study TWO Modern European Languages – from French, Spanish and German. All boys study Latin or Classical Civilisation, and Theology. In addition they all have Critical Thinking classes, which includes an IT component. P.S.H.E. Education is delivered via form masters and lectures.

Boys' **physical education in the Shell year** is provided for by introduction to a comprehensive range of sports; in the first term all will be taught the rudiments of rowing, fives, golf, squash, real tennis, but in addition to these virtually all boys play rugby and represent the school (seven Midgets – under 14 – rugby XV's are turned out on a Saturday). Boys play sport on four days of the week, including, for the most part, on Saturdays. In the Lent Term all boys either row or play Hockey. In the summer they play cricket, run, play tennis or row. Thereafter, in the next 4 years – Remove, Fifth, 6.1 and 6.2 (Y10 to Y13) - boys play sport four or five times a week; they are fit, well exercised and well coached.

At the end of the Shell year, boys continue with a core of subjects to GCSE or IGCSE: the able boys are stretched with early IGCSEs in the Remove year in Maths and French. Other boys in the Remove and Fifth years take two years to GCSE or IGCSE in the other core subjects of English and Science. Boys take IGCSE Dual Award Science or separate Sciences according to a 'cut' which is made at the end of the Remove year. Either path allows boys to take and succeed in Science A-levels and thence to read Natural Sciences (Cambridge) or separate Sciences or Engineering

(Oxford, Bristol, Durham, London etc) at university. The majority of boys in higher English sets also take English Literature.

Boys then choose four subjects from 12 **options**. Boys are encouraged to keep a broad education between 14 and 16, and to consider a humanity, a second language and a creative subject from the Option groups. Nevertheless, boys at that stage are already showing particular aptitudes, and some will choose to pursue strengths towards, for example, Latin and Greek; German and Spanish; DT and Art; History and Geography. Computer Science is also available.

Theology continues as a compulsory part of the curriculum to ensure boys have the skills to negotiate ethical issues in society. P.S.H.E. Education is, from the Remove year onwards, delivered via the Form Master and by a sequence of keynote lectures on which the form master bases their Friday afternoon session (see P.S.H.E. Education policy).

Boys are encouraged to think about **careers** throughout their time at Radley. Details of activities can be found in the Careers Policy. <https://www.radley.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Careers.pdf>

Some boys arrive at Radley highly skilled in **IT**, but many do not. Skills are taught within the Shells Critical Thinking lessons as well as throughout the curriculum. Coding is taught to all Shells as part of the DT syllabus as well as in an optional Monday activity. We are developing IT competency tests (Nulia etc) to ensure that all pupils reach a given standard. We have an IT Helpdesk to support boys and staff with any help that they need with hardware or software.

Academic Priority Time

This exists on Monday of each week, allowing for academic stretch activities organised by dons or boys, usually (but not always) on a departmental basis, overseen, for Lower School, centrally. Guest speakers may be invited.

Scholars' Programme

The Scholars' Programme is led and organised for the benefit of both award holders and those who show exceptional talent and/or interest on arrival at Radley. It seeks to promote deeper engagement with academic thought among members of the lower school. The Head of Scholars reserves the right to add or delete names according to levels of engagement.

Sixth Form Curriculum

Introduction

The educational course at Radley is designed to teach boys the value of hard work and an intelligent management of time.

We aim for breadth in a boy's academic programme, we try to ensure intellectual stimulus both inside and outside the curriculum, and we seek to achieve an easy command of, and familiarity with, Information Technology. We also endeavour to train Sixth Formers in the ability to research and synthesise for themselves, to learn independently. Beyond that we hope to awaken in Radleians an appreciation of literature and the arts so that they can gain real pleasure from pursuing these interests in their adult lives. When a Radleian leaves the Sixth Form, it is expected that he will have those attributes necessary both to command a worthwhile place in Higher Education and – beyond that – to compete effectively in the market place for jobs in the 21st century. A-levels are complemented by a broad range of options in the Curriculum Extension Programme (CEP).

Unless a boy is doing Further Maths*, he will not be expected to take more than three A-level subjects. Of course, if a boy wishes to study four subjects other than a combination that includes Further Maths, we shall not try to hinder him, but it is not necessary to take four to enter the best universities.

In addition to taking his A-levels, every boy will generally be expected to undertake two CEP options. (See the Curriculum Extension Programme document.) On top of that, we have innovative Joint Study Days with local schools, notably St Helen and St Katharine, Abingdon, Downe House, Newbury and Broadway Academy, Birmingham. https://issuu.com/radleycollege/docs/curriculum_extension_programme?fr=sZTZjMTMwMDIyOQ

Q: Through the Radley Sixth Form Curriculum, what do we want to achieve?

A: To equip boys to:

- be more independent in their thinking and practice
- take greater ownership over their academic work
- be able to make a successful transition to university level study
- engage fruitfully in extension work of their own choosing
- to be able to exercise critical thinking and sensible discernment in a complex and often confusing world.

To increase flexibility of study in the sixth form curriculum, so:

- boys can tailor their study to particular interests, which may or may not emerge from existing A-level study
- investigate subjects or areas not covered specifically in Radley's A-level options (e.g. Engineering, Law, Environmental Science, International Relations) through elements of the Curriculum Extension Programme, helping boys to decide whether or not to study them at university

To make available an externally recognised extension qualification (eg EPQ) a part of a Radleian's UCAS application, thereby:

- providing quantifiable evidence of a boy's academic aptitude and potential, which can be used in combination with predicted A-level grades
- demonstrating to universities a boy's ability to pursue independent study
- providing an opportunity for certain universities to reduce grade offers based on the attainment of a specified EPQ grade (e.g. Newcastle and Bath)
- adding greater academic 'punch' to a personal statement

What is the timeline for choosing A-levels?

- Michaelmas term: boys are briefed on subjects which are only offered at A-level and they submit their *initial* preferences by online poll to stimulate thought and aid central planning
- December: parents receive the 'A-level choices' email and, using the college website, discuss choices with boys during the Christmas holidays
- January: Fifth Form boys meet with the Academic Director regarding their choices. They submit their preliminary selection online. Ongoing discussion of preliminary choices by boys, Tutors, Heads of Department, the Academic Director, and the Director of University Entrance (**with flexibility until September**)
- February: The Parents' meeting is held to confirm or review boys' initial choices
- March: boys and Tutors make revised choices, if necessary. We like these choices at this point to be as firm as possible to assist with the planning of staffing and timetabling, although there is, of course, flexibility for change thereafter

What is the timetable for the Curriculum Extension Programme?

- Summer term of Vths used to inform boys of the CEP options
- Curriculum Extension Programme course and/or qualification to be completed by the end of 6.1 year, leaving 6.2 year free to concentrate on A-level completion and revision (although some E.P.Q. 'tidying-up' may occur in September after reflection over the summer holiday)

Choosing A-levels

We offer a four block system which caters to as many A-level combinations as possible. Blocks are essential if a school is to undertake setting, which we believe - with the backing of considerable academic evidence - is vital to enable boys to progress and excel at a pace appropriate to them. **No block system can provide for every conceivable combination and, in a small number of cases, some boys will need to revise their initial preferences.** Advice is available from Heads of Department, Tutors and the Director of University Entrance. In timetabling five academic years across the 13-18 age range, it is sometimes impossible to staff a particular subject's lower and upper school teaching programme, which would be the consequence of block changes made to accommodate requests for combinations which don't work with the blocks as presented.

*Further Maths technically counts as two A-levels, but requires approximately only 75% of the teaching time of two subjects.

Subject option blocks can be found here:
https://issuu.com/radleycollege/docs/choosing_your_a_levels

ONLY ONE SUBJECT CAN BE CHOSEN FROM EACH BLOCK

- Mathematics and Further Mathematics: those taking these subjects will be taught in block 1 and in lessons that fall outside the blocks in order that the maximum number of different combinations of subjects alongside these two is possible
- Greek, German, Latin and Music will be taught in such blocks as maximise the number of pupils who wish to take them.

Principles of Choice

It should be noted that there is a very large variety of exciting A-level combinations, which can lead to the study of a wide range of stimulating courses, at top-class universities. It is important to do careful research and to take care to avoid myths or out of date information. For example, a potential doctor or dentist must have Chemistry at the core of his A-levels, but a lawyer does not need to have a set of purely 'essay subjects' at A-level, nor do those wanting careers in the financial sector necessarily have to do Maths and/or Economics at A-level.

We also know that boys can enter an equally wide variety of highly successful careers as a result of those courses. These issues are addressed in detail at the February Vth Form Parents' Meeting, although boys will have been advised about these matters from the Michaelmas term. It is accepted that a few boys will not settle fully upon their choices until early in the Michaelmas term of their 6.1 year, though of course it is far better if firm and informed choices can be made before then.

In guiding choice it is important to note that:

- Where a boy is undecided about the future, his choice will quite naturally be determined by his interest in, and aptitude for, various subjects. There is little to restrict the choice of the non-scientist, though various combinations of subjects are often followed and have been found advantageous. Advice is given on these.
- A boy with scientific ambitions may find his choice of A-level subject rather more restricted. For the study of Medicine, good grades are required in Chemistry, and usually in Biology, with

Physics or Maths. Anyone considering a course in Veterinary Science must take Chemistry, and is **strongly advised to take Biology** since it is now required by the majority of Veterinary Schools. For Engineering, Maths and Physics are required A-level subjects. These may be combined with Further Maths, Chemistry or Design. By contrast, entry to the Services, the professions, teaching, the Civil Service, business and industry rarely requires a particular A-level subject.

- In the 6.1 year, each boy is assigned a UCAS Supervisor (who may or not be his Form Master) with the brief of leading him through all stages of the application process.

Sixth Form Work

There is something of a gulf between GCSE and A-level work. Lower School academic life is tightly structured. The Sixth Former has to learn quickly how to be independent, manage his time, meet prep deadlines, write essays and take notes from directed reading. Sixth Form Study Skills resources are provided for time management, noting, reading, essay writing and revision. All this supplements the usual subject-specific advice and guidance given by departments. The Head of Teaching & Learning gives regular talks and provides resources.

Equally significant is a boy's choice of a Form Master (who may teach one of his A-levels), and whose brief is to help him:

- develop those independent working habits outlined above;
- monitor work and time spent outside lessons through weekly tutorials;
- give specialist university advice (alongside the Tutor and Director of University Entrance);
- foster study beyond the scope of A-levels and;
- promote the boy's cultural enrichment.

A number of boys will emerge early in 6.1 as possible Oxbridge candidates (although they will almost certainly have been receiving extension work long before this) and each year we determine a long list at the end of the Lent Term. Competition for Oxbridge places is intense. The departmental academic societies and the school-wide 6.1 Crowson Society and the Upper Sixth Society aim to broaden boys' minds by introducing them to moral, philosophical, literary, scientific and historical problems at fortnightly meetings, where they are hosted by some of our most accomplished dons.

From 2018, boys have benefited from the Cook Fellow and Graduate Teacher schemes whereby post-graduates from abroad and from Oxford assist in the area of academic 'stretch' through talks, discussion groups and other fora. Additionally, each term 6.1 boys attend lectures on ethical or moral subjects which are designed both to educate and stimulate discussion. This is part of the Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship and Economic programme which runs through Radley from the Shells to 6.2. The Academic Priority Time (APT) slot on Monday continues to evolve, extending opportunities for boys to pursue Independent Learning and providing a challenging intellectual experience outside their regular study of exam-based subjects, including a stimulating and varied speaker list. These have included Cabinet ministers, top scientists, intelligence and military professionals and leaders from the worlds of business and commerce.

Teaching Policy

The aim at Radley is to ensure that every boy achieves his full potential. Excellent teaching, and the setting of consistently high standards, are the means to realising this goal.

Teaching dons at Radley should know their subjects thoroughly, and by their enthusiasm seek to excite in the boys an abiding academic curiosity. They should encourage boys to think and research for themselves, the better to prepare them for life-long learning.

Lessons should be thoroughly prepared; well-judged in content and duration; have a clear purpose, beginning and end; and a variety of techniques should be used including – where appropriate – IT. Instructions and clarification should be clearly indicated. Use should be made of online platforms to set work and provide resources.

Prep should be set regularly and marked conscientiously in accordance with department marking policies. Poor work should not be tolerated but returned for rewriting. Teaching dons in all departments have a responsibility for ensuring that spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors are corrected. Nevertheless it is very important to encourage, motivate and reward boys for good work wherever possible.

Teaching dons must ensure that all boys are equally involved in a lesson, by judicious questioning, and by managing discussions and debates appropriately. They should differentiate, within a given set, between those who can be stretched more than the rest of the group and those who clearly have difficulties. The setting of tasks and the pace at which work is done, may be varied accordingly. Dons should be aware of boys receiving Academic Support, and should discuss the progress of such boys with the Academic Support Team. As far as possible, assistance for boys with SEND and other learning issues consists of a partnership between the relevant academic department and Academic Support. Regular updates on SEND and other learning issues are sent to teaching dons. Form Masters and Tutors have an important role in monitoring boys' teaching and progress.

The school has, since 2018, had a Graduates-in-Residence scheme, whereby Oxford post-graduates are employed to teach lessons and provide extra academic stimulation to the Gifted and Talented through beyond-the-classroom discussion groups, specialised talks and interdisciplinary cooperation. This scheme aims to ensure that the Gifted and Talented (who may or may not hold academic awards) are provided with the encouragement and drive to succeed to their fullest potential.

The quality of teaching at Radley has been immeasurably helped by mutual classroom observation, by regular training (each don should attend, ideally, at least one training course a year) and by regular professional discussion of subject matter and of the craft of teaching. There is a detailed induction programme of observation, mentoring and meetings for new dons, and the head of department is responsible for monitoring the teaching in his subject area. The Head of Teaching & Learning and Professional Development Coordinator work alongside the Academic Director to ensure that continuing professional development and innovation in teaching and learning are integral to all areas of the Radley curriculum.

It is very important for the school literacy strategy that all dons follow the guidance on spelling and grammatical corrections and on the inculcation of the techniques of comprehension and organisation.

Handwriting: there should be an element of handwriting in every subject in every year group to maintain an appropriate skill level in preparation for written exams.

Start of term

Term officially starts for Common Room with the Warden's meeting for all dons before the boys return each term.

The Daily Routine

Five minutes are provided at the beginning of first lesson each day for the daily Bible reading. (This can be found each day in the Calendar). Dons may ask for it to be read aloud, may give boys time to read the passage themselves, or may allow for a 'reflective moment'. In any case, the custom should be observed.

Change-over

Between each lesson there is a five minute change-over. Dons should ensure that they release classes on time. Likewise **dons should be in their classrooms on time**, preferably before boys arrive from their previous lesson or a break. (Experience has shown that if bullying occurs at form level it tends to occur between lessons or when a don arrives late for a lesson.) On releasing boys, dons should remember that **tardiness has a knock-on effect on other dons' classes**.

Classroom discipline

Ten points to ensure good behaviour in class and high standards of work:

1. Boys should stand up when a don enters the classroom.
2. Boys (and dons!) should come to a lesson properly dressed – with gowns, top button done up, shoes clean.
3. Their hair should be tidy/combed.
4. Eating, chewing gum, are not permitted.
5. They should be punctual (and so should dons).
6. Boys must bring the appropriate books and equipment to a lesson.
7. Dons should be properly addressed when spoken to (Sir, or Miss/Mrs/Ms in the case of female dons); boys should not shout out in class, but wait to be asked to contribute.
8. Prep should always be completed by the time set by a don; and they should be done well.
9. Work should be neatly presented; **unsatisfactory work should always be returned to be done again**.
10. Boys leave the classroom in an orderly way, putting chairs under tables as they depart. (It is customary for a Radleian to thank a don at the end of the lesson.)

Missing lessons

Dons who have to miss a lesson must inform their Head of Department and the Academic Director. The HoD will arrange cover within the Department. If that is not possible, then the HoD should ask the other departments with whom his is grouped (the cluster system), for cover. Lower School lessons must always be covered. If Sixth Form lessons cannot be covered, boys must be given specific work to do either in a library or their Socials.

A don who has to be away for anything more than the odd lesson should inform the Warden and his PA by email and get the Warden's agreement. The HoD will arrange cover, as above.

Prep

Lower School forms do prep daily in their Socials as timetabled in the calendar. They can complete work at a time convenient to them, in addition to the designated times. Sixth Formers also do prep at this time but are expected to spend considerably more time in addition to formal prep time. Lower School prep should either be set in class (this is best, if possible) or e-mailed (or ideally communicated via Firefly) in good time. **It is extremely important that all prep should be set and marked carefully and quickly. It is good to work on the principle that a prep should be returned to a set the following lesson.** In this way, proper feedback is rapidly given and boys' interest and engagement maintained. Boys have a space in their Calendars in which to enter each prep. It is perfectly possible – and acceptable – for a lower school boy to complete formal prep at other times of the day and then read in 'official' prep time.

Reporting

Interim Reports

Interim reports are written on boys roughly once every three weeks. These are primarily for internal use although we do now send them to parents. As such, they are not intended to be as polished as end of term reports, but dons should be aware that they have a broader audience. (See Reports policy.) <https://www.radley.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Reporting.pdf>

Effort is graded as:

E=Exceptional

V=Very Good

G=Good

F=Fair

U=Unsatisfactory

P=Poor

Performance is graded as:

1=Exceptional

2=Very Good

3=Good

4=Fair

5=Unsatisfactory

6=Poor

"Good" and "Fair" are intended to be the most common grades. "Exceptional" and "Poor" are only rarely given.

Dons may add an amplifying comment for their subject where needed. NB **This should definitely be provided where a grading is poor – either as part of a concerning pattern or where it is a recent problem. Parents will naturally expect some information as to why grades are low.**

Sixth Form Interim Reports

Sixth Form boys write their own comments into their report before dons make their comments. Sixth Form reports do not make use of the grades above and a comment is given by all dons. Boys and dons are expected to write meaningful comments and boys should properly reflect on their progress (or lack of it), to allow dons to respond with effective suggestions for improvement.

Sending to Parents

Reports are sent to parents as pdfs by e-mail (usually early in the week following the report).

End of Term Reports

Reports are sent to parents as pdfs by e-mail after the end of term with the following message:

The end of term report system has two parts. The first comprises subject reports with a summary from the form master and these are attached to this email. Parents should then receive a letter from your son's tutor in about a week's time which provides an overview of his progress, and which will explain any issues raised in his report.

Wellbeing in the Digital Environment and Staying Safe Online

Every child has the right to access the digital world creatively, knowledgeable and fearlessly. Without access, they are disadvantaged. Wellbeing in the Digital Environment and Staying Safe Online is taught by Form Masters and by external specialists including Karl Hopwood (www.esafetyltd.co.uk). The aim is to empower, build resilience, and promote appropriate long-term behaviours. The following topics are covered in the PSHE Education course:

Shells: Digital security and privacy, responsible and safe use of SN sites, online reputation, identifying and managing digital risks including how to access help through CEOP, managing digital-time, cyberbullying.

Removes: Identifying and managing digital risks, sexting and the law, pornography, copyright and ownership, managing online information, seeking help online (e.g. www.thinkuknow.co.uk).

Fifths: Pornography, digital security and finance including gambling, mental health and wellbeing in a Digital Age.

Radley College and the promoting of British Values

The inculcation of Radley College students with regard to British Values - a respect for the workings of democracy, the rule of law, free speech, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs - is central to the everyday working and curriculum of the school.

Examples of where these values are promoted can be seen in the following (and other) areas of school life:

Core elements of the school curriculum: these promote understanding that while democracy may be imperfect, it is generally considered to be superior to alternative forms of government. In History, for example, which is studied by all in Year 9, a detailed study is done on the rise and fall of the Weimar democracy and the Third Reich. The obvious contrast between the efforts of the former to create a democracy, abide by the rule of law, respect individual liberty and create a tolerant society (and the exact opposite in all areas in the latter), allows for a detailed and involved examination of values which are also central to British life and offer a stark illustration of what happens when these are denied. Equally, English lessons allow a forum for study, through different types of literature, of clashes between the desire for individual human liberty and repressive systems and attitudes. Compulsory Theology lessons for Year 9 open up further possibilities for discussing individual human rights and the need for a pluralistic society. These issues are further discussed in PSHE sessions (in year groups and by form). In the sixth form, large numbers of students study History, English, Classics, Theology, Modern Languages and Politics, where similar themes are explored in more depth. There is also a voluntary programme of lectures and discussion for all boys and staff which allows for plenty of exploration of citizenship issues: the importance of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and tolerance of those of other faiths and beliefs. There is an ongoing theme of freedom of speech in the lecture programme.

Societies: there are many schoolwide societies, including subject departmental, academic year group, Philosophy, International Relations, Christian Forum, Debating, Creative Writing and Symposium societies, where the full gamut of issues arising related to British and wider values of respect for the individual and pluralism are debated and discussed. Students and staff regularly are encouraged to debate and discuss about how British society is ordered and how it might be defended and improved.

School literature: the school magazines regularly contain articles discussing matters relating to British Values. This might take the form, for example, of students' reflections on hearing a lecture from political dissidents from North Korea or other non-democratic countries or victims of the Holocaust. The Holocaust Conference is annual for the 6.2 year group.

Student representation on school bodies: boys are encouraged to sit on representative bodies within and beyond boarding houses, which debate their conditions and rights. They are regularly consulted on their privileges, punishments and attitudes, in annual anonymous surveys.

Collective acts of worship: in the school Chapel there are regular sermons about, prayers for and thoughts and reflections on, those who have suffered for speaking out for democracy, the rule of law, tolerance and defence of others' right to be themselves. Every Thursday the Warden talks in Chapel about a topical issue giving opportunities for pupils to think about these issues.

Mock elections: these seek to promote the understanding, practice and benefits of multi-party democracy and student organisation and participation in these - as candidates, activists, electoral officials and voters - helps to inculcate British Values.

In these various ways, it is seen that Radley College fosters a great deal of ongoing debate about, and instruction in, core British Values.

Finally, schools face many demands for change in the 21st century. However, the innovations set out within this policy and the college website departmental pages only serve to reinforce the traditional beliefs which we hold about the nature of our work at Radley, and our relationships with, and duties towards, parents and boys alike.