

Earlscliffe (Earlscliffe Ltd)

Policy: Curriculum Policy and Assessment policy

Members of SLT responsible: Head Teacher and Deputy Head (Academic)

Date of review: November 2024

Date of next review: June 2025

Rationale and Aims

Earlscliffe is an independent school (for 14-19 yr olds) with an academic curriculum and our standards and expectations are aimed at enabling each student to realise their potential academic ability. We concentrate through the curriculum on developing students' individual abilities and confidence. We are not an academically-selective school but require applicants to demonstrate a level of English (and mathematics where applicable) that demonstrates the ability to succeed upon their chosen programme of study.

Curriculum Combinations

Earlscliffe offers a range of two-year A Level subjects, a narrower range of GCSEs as part of a one year GCSE programme, a one year Business & Management Diploma, a Pre-A-Level course and BTEC Sport. All students study English for Academic Purposes alongside their A-levels or Business & Management Diploma; within their One Year GCSE or Pre-A-Level or BTEC Sport programme.

The following, non-exhaustive, subject options outline the main GCE A Level curriculum combinations that are available at Earlscliffe:

Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics

Biology, Chemistry, Physics

Biology, Chemistry, Psychology

Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry

Mathematics, Physics, Art

Mathematics, Economics, and one of Business, Politics, Geography, History, a Modern Foreign language

Mathematics, Economics and one of Psychology, a Modern Foreign Language

Further Mathematics, Mathematics, Physics

Further Mathematics, Mathematics, Economics

History, Geography and one of Economics, Politics, a Modern Foreign Language

Politics, Economics, Geography

English Literature and two from History, Geography, Politics, a Modern Foreign Language

Art, Photography, Business or a Modern Foreign Language

Timetabling and Tuition

We teach in small groups with normally no more than twelve students in each class, except in certain circumstances, i.e. pre-exam preparation lessons. The size of the groups ensures that each student receives close attention whilst at the same time gaining the benefits of learning in a group environment.

We believe that frequent, high-quality teaching contact time is essential to A Level success. We aim to minimise the number of periods for Private Study within each student's timetable. Our allocation of 6 hours of teaching time per main A Level subject and for English for Academic Purposes per week is key to our aim – enabling each student to realise their potential academic ability.

Two periods each Wednesday afternoon are given over to non-academic activities.

Students come to Earlscliffe on the understanding that they will work hard. Teachers set homework that reinforces subject content and subject specific skills development.

The following is a guide:

- at least 4 hours per week for each AS/Year 12 subject
- at least 4 hours per week for each A2/Year 13 subject
- At least 2 hours per week in each GCSE/Year 11 subject

Pre-A-Level

Some students will come to Earlscliffe who are not in possession of a level of English ability to enable them to begin an A-level, GCSE or Diploma programme. Such students can join the Pre-A-Level programme that places significant emphasis on the development of academic English whilst also introducing the students to the subjects they will progress on to study at the completion of the Pre-A-Level.

One Year GCSE (OYG)

Students join this course with the objective of progressing to A-level or the IB. Students complete examinations in up to six subjects at the end of the academic year. All OYG students sit the IELTS exam and are offered a choice of creative, artistic and technical options to supplement the core every Wednesday afternoon as part of our wider "Sports and Community Service" programme.

In the autumn term, OYG students are often joined by "Study Abroad" students for one term to gain an academic and cultural experience of education in an English independent school.

ATHE Diploma in Business & Management

This Diploma is a QCF Level 3 qualification equivalent to two A-levels. This course provides a pathway to UK university entry, especially when combined with other qualifications. This course is designed for students who wish to concentrate on the study of business, and who generally perform better when assessed continuously rather than in lengthy, synoptic exams.

BTEC Sport

The school offers the QCF Level 3 BTEC Sport qualification that is equivalent to one A-level.

PSHEE

Our PSHEE provision is delivered in a timetabled lesson for every student once a week.

Earlscliffe is committed to providing Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural guidance and opportunities to all students both within the academic curriculum and outside it.

Tutoring System

Each student at the School has a Senior Tutor. A central aspect of the Senior Tutor role is to have a complete overview of a student during their time at the School - academic, pastoral, boarding SEN, medical, university and job applications, career intentions - and provide a single hub of contact for parents with the School and a "go to" person for advice and guidance.

Each student also has a Group Tutor whose role is to undertake registration and provide an informal and welcoming start to the day during Tutor Group period and also be aware of students who are a cause for concern during Tutor Group period.

Assessment, Reporting and Recording

We aim to use assessment both formatively and summatively within the curriculum with the express aim of evaluating students' progress and informing the future planning of both teaching and learning as a part of the process of continuous improvement. Individual subject teachers use their ongoing formative assessment which includes marking, discussions and feedback to students, to affirm what students know and can do, thereby motivating and encouraging them. This information is also used to diagnose weaknesses and identify positive steps to remedy them, including setting targets.

Every half term the students will be summatively assessed in a formal setting.

Monitoring and Evaluation of the Curriculum

Monitoring and evaluation are essential aspects of the school's aim to raise achievement. Within the curriculum, this involves focusing on teaching and learning, the performance of students, the effectiveness of teachers and hence the standard of achievement across the whole school. The teacher review and development programme allows for different degrees of scrutiny and analysis for different areas of the curriculum at different times. The process of monitoring and evaluating in the curriculum has much in common with the process of

assessment for the students of the college. We believe that the process should be open and shared. The purpose of monitoring and evaluating should be clear to all involved. It should be seen as a supportive and developmental process aimed at improving standards throughout the school. Teachers should be aware of the criteria for judging success and this is contained in the standard pro-formas for lesson observation. Teachers are expected to self-evaluate their own performance and that of the school, as facilitated through Inset and other staff meetings.

Teachers will be asked to review exam results post-August and to formulate an action plan, with the support of the school's leaders.

The school is committed to widening access to its curriculum and activities to students who may have a special educational need, including a disability (Equality Act 2010)