


# Earlscliffe

Senior School | Sixth Form



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# Curriculum & Assessment Policy

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## 1. Introduction

Earlscliffe is an independent, international sixth form college for students aged 14–19. The school provides full-time education for students of compulsory school age and beyond, in accordance with the requirements of the Independent School Standards.

The curriculum at Earlscliffe is designed specifically to meet the needs of an international student body, many of whom are preparing for entry to UK and global universities. It is academically focused, intensive and structured to enable students to make rapid progress within a relatively short period of time.

This policy outlines the intent, structure and delivery of the curriculum and should be read alongside: -

- Careers Education Policy
- English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy
- More Able and Talented Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy
- PHSE and Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) Policies

For further details regarding implementation, please refer to the following policies:

- Assessment and Marking Policy
- Homework Policy
- Monitoring and Evaluating Teaching and Learning

## 2. Curriculum Intent

The Earlscliffe curriculum is designed to:

- enable all students to achieve strong academic outcomes in externally accredited qualifications;
- develop the English language proficiency required for success in academic study and university entry;
- prepare students effectively for progression to higher education, including competitive UK and international universities;
- foster independent learning, intellectual curiosity and critical thinking;
- support the personal, social and cultural development of students within an international boarding environment;
- provide a structured and supportive framework in which students develop confidence, resilience and self-discipline;
- promote respect for different cultures, values and perspectives, reflecting the diverse international community of the school.

The curriculum reflects the school's belief that students achieve best when academic ambition is combined with strong pastoral support and high expectations.

### 3. Curriculum Structure

#### 3.1 Curriculum Pathways

Earlscliffe offers a number of defined academic pathways designed to meet students at different starting points and prepare them for progression:

1. *Pre-A Level Programme*

A foundation programme for students who require further development in English language and academic skills before progressing to GCSE or A Level study.

2. *One Year GCSE Programme (OYG)*

An intensive one-year programme enabling students to gain up to six GCSE qualifications and prepare for A Level or equivalent study.

3. *A Level Programme*

A two-year programme in which students typically study three A Levels, with options tailored to support university aspirations.

4. *Diploma and Alternative Pathways*

Including the ATHE Level 3 Diploma in Business & Management and BTEC Sport, providing alternative routes to higher education.

All programmes are supported, where required, by English for Academic Purposes (EAP), which is integrated into students' timetables.

#### 3.2 Curriculum Journey

The curriculum is designed as a progressive journey:

- **Foundation:** Development of English proficiency and core academic skills (Pre-A Level)
- **Consolidation:** Acquisition of recognised qualifications and subject breadth (GCSE)
- **Specialisation:** Focused academic study aligned to university pathways (A Level / Diploma)
- **Transition:** Preparation for higher education, including study skills, applications and academic independence

This structured progression enables students to move from supported learning environments towards increasing independence in preparation for university study.

### **3.3 Timetabling and Teaching Time**

Students are taught in small groups, typically with no more than twelve students per class. This allows for:

- close academic monitoring;
- frequent individual feedback;
- active participation in lessons.

A Level subjects are typically allocated approximately six hours of teaching time per week. English for Academic Purposes is allocated approximately 4.5 hours per week where required.

The timetable is designed to maximise teaching contact time while also allowing for independent study and non-academic activities.

The school day at Earlscliffe is structured to provide a balanced and purposeful schedule for learning, enrichment and wellbeing. Students are expected to arrive by 8.25am, with registration and tutor time beginning promptly at 8.30am.

The formal teaching day consists of eight 45-minute lessons, complemented by a 15-minute morning break and a 60-minute lunch break. A daily 15-minute tutor period or forum further supports the school's community ethos and shared values.

The academic day concludes at 4.00pm, after which Students have the opportunity to participate in co-curricular activities. Many gain membership at the local gym (Tre Fitness) and use the facilities regularly.

The allocation of time between subjects reflects the school's experience of the relative demands that these subjects make upon Students.

## **4. Teaching and Learning**

Teaching at Earlscliffe is characterised by:

- high levels of teacher-student interaction within small classes;
- regular assessment and feedback to support rapid progress;
- a focus on examination success alongside deeper subject understanding;
- explicit development of academic skills, including essay writing, research and analysis;
- integration of English language development within subject teaching where appropriate.

Students are expected to take increasing responsibility for their own learning, including the completion of independent study and homework.

Homework is set regularly to reinforce learning and develop subject-specific skills:

- A Level students complete approximately four hours of independent work per subject per week;
- GCSE students complete approximately two hours per subject per week.

## 5. EAP (English for Academic Purposes)

This is a key provision which, whilst not unique to Earlscliffe, is normally seen in University Foundation programmes. We believe it is crucial for Students to be fluent in the academic language necessary for their success.

English for Academic Purposes (EAP) involves training students in the specific language and study skills needed to succeed in higher education, focusing on reading, writing, listening, and speaking within an academic context.

### Key Aspects of EAP

- **Core Skills:** EAP develops academic writing (essays, reports), listening (lectures), reading (academic texts), and speaking (seminars, presentations).
- **Academic Language:** Focuses on formality, precision, objectivity, and vocabulary crucial for academic discourse.
- **Study Skills:** Often includes training in critical thinking, referencing, research methods, and time management.

## 6. Subjects on Offer

### At GCSE: -

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English Language</li> <li>• Mathematics</li> <li>• Physics</li> <li>• Chemistry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biology</li> <li>• Business Studies</li> <li>• Art</li> </ul>
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### At A Level (BTEC)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English Literature</li> <li>• Mathematics</li> <li>• Further Mathematics</li> <li>• Physics</li> <li>• Chemistry</li> <li>• Biology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Geography</li> <li>• History</li> <li>• Economics</li> <li>• Business Studies</li> <li>• Fine Art</li> <li>• Photography</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Psychology</li> <li>• Sports (BTEC)</li> <li>• Business Dip</li> <li>• MFL</li> <li>• Own language</li> </ul>
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## 7. Assessment, Reporting and Progress Monitoring

Assessment at Earlscliffe is both formative and summative and is used to support student progress and inform teaching.

- **Formative assessment** includes ongoing feedback, marking, discussion and target-setting.
- **Summative assessment** takes place formally at least once each half term.

Assessment outcomes are used to:

- monitor individual student progress;
- identify areas for improvement;
- inform intervention strategies where required.

Students receive regular feedback on their performance, and progress is communicated to parents through reports and consultations.

## 8. Personal Development and Enrichment

The curriculum is supported by a programme of personal development and enrichment designed to complement academic study.

- a) *PSHEE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education)*  
All students participate in a weekly PSHEE programme, which supports their personal development and prepares them for life beyond school.
- b) *Non-Academic Activities*  
A minimum of two periods per week are allocated to non-academic activities, which may include sport, community engagement and enrichment opportunities.
- c) *University Preparation*  
Preparation for higher education is an integral part of the curriculum and includes:
  - guidance on university applications;
  - development of study skills;
  - support with personal statements and interviews.

The boarding environment provides further opportunities for social, cultural and personal development within an international community.

## 9. Tutorial System

Each student is supported through a structured tutorial system.

### **Boarding Tutor**

Provides daily oversight of the student's academic progress, wellbeing, university applications and personal development, and acts as the main point of contact for parents.

### **Group Tutor**

Supports students on a day-to-day basis through registration and regular contact, ensuring that any concerns are identified and addressed promptly.

This system ensures that each student is known as an individual and supported throughout their time at the school.

## **10. Inclusion and Access**

Earlscliffe is committed to widening access to its curriculum and ensuring that all students can participate fully in school life.

Appropriate support is provided for students with:

- English as an additional language;
- Special educational needs and/or disabilities (Equality Act 2010).

Teaching approaches and curriculum provision are adapted as necessary to support individual needs.

## **11. Monitoring and Evaluation**

The curriculum is subject to regular monitoring and evaluation to ensure that it remains effective and appropriate.

This includes:

- review of student outcomes and examination results;
- lesson observation and staff development processes;
- departmental review and self-evaluation;
- analysis of feedback from students and staff.

Teachers are expected to reflect on their own practice and contribute to the ongoing development of the curriculum.

## **12. Review and Governance**

This policy is reviewed annually by the Senior Leadership Team.

The implementation of the curriculum is overseen by the Head Teacher and Deputy Head (Academic), who are responsible for ensuring that the curriculum meets the needs of students and complies with regulatory requirements.