

Background

Following Michael Gove's educational reforms, and the withdrawal of coursework, students currently study ten or eleven subjects, rather than the previous thirteen. Thomas Telford School teaching day has two teaching sessions running from 8:30am until 3:15pm, with an additional third session from 3.30pm until 5:00pm Monday to Thursday. This enables our students to access a more flexible provision of academic study, alongside sporting and recreational activities. Almost 100% of students remain in school for at least one Session 3 per week and a significant majority participate more than twice per week. The formal taught week is 28 hours 45 minutes with an additional 6 hours per available for session 3.

Curriculum Philosophy and Vision

We are ambitious for the whole school community and we offer a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum. Our aim is to ensure outstanding examination outcomes within a happy, harmonious and respectful community.

The school must work hard and skilfully to develop student resilience, so that our pupils can establish themselves in a rapidly changing and globalised society. Recognition and acceptance of difference, in a world where personal and international conflicts unfold daily on the internet, is key to preparing our students for adult life. We should all promote e-safety and recognise the tremendous benefits that technology can bring, when used as a force for good.

Our high standards and expectations will ensure that Thomas Telford School maintains a calm working environment, for students and for staff. Outstanding behaviour should be the norm and positive working relationships will engender a culture of mutual respect. We should all be proud of the ethos of the school and aim to ensure that every child feels safe. We should promote a healthy lifestyle and positive relationships. Being particularly vigilant in our monitoring and dealing with the very rare occasions of racist, homophobic or sexist incidents is essential. Safeguarding generally must be highly prioritised and all students should have access to Relationship and Sex Education. Our vertical tutor group system should ensure that our pupils are in contact as supportive role models and mentors.

The expectation is that staff will provide excellent teaching, which should be engaging for learners and fulfilling for teachers. The aim to ensure that both employees and students feel valued, through ongoing recognition of the students' achievements and the part played by teachers in achieving outstanding outcomes. The Head is always prepared to be available to meet with students and employees.

We must recognise that some members of our school community will require additional support in accessing the curriculum and in managing their emotions, and we should provide this support in a number of ways. Teachers should be able to identify SEND and disadvantaged students and adapt their lessons accordingly. The school will need to provide emotional and behavioural support for a cohort of pupils where appropriate utilising the supportive nurture unit. We should all recognize that we have a responsibility to ensure all pupils have the opportunity to build up cultural capital so that our more disadvantaged students have the same opportunities as their more advantaged peers. For this reason, all students should follow the Ebacc suite of subjects and all teachers should promote social and cultural knowledge during lessons.

Teachers must focus on not only **what** but also **how** students learn; subject curriculum plans should be organised and delivered to aid recall and retention and to ensure sufficient levels of challenge and support. Staff need to regularly recap and revisit work so that students can build on previous knowledge and skills. This will mean our pupils will be confident in their abilities supported by regular key assessments and reports to parents to ensure they are able to recognise their strengths and act on areas for development. Making use of the online curriculum and providing high quality remote learning materials should be the norm. This is particularly essential as the implications of the pandemic continue to impact upon student attendance. Identifying loss of learning will require catch up strategies that must be focused and carefully monitored.

Our vision is to develop the skills, attitudes and abilities of our students to enable them to make effective decisions about their future education, training, employment and life as an adult member of society. All students at Thomas Telford School benefit from a planned curriculum and programme of careers activities to help them make curriculum choices that are right for them and to develop the personal resources and readiness that will enable them to manage their careers throughout their lives. Ensuring that all students have a positive destination when they leave the School

is a priority target with nil NEET students (Not in Education Employment or Training), with a near 100% success over the years.

Supporting staff wellbeing is also important to our ethos in our learning community. Our teachers have access to high quality professional development opportunities that focus on research based effective teaching and learning. Subject leaders and senior leaders carry out regular lesson observations and offer developmental feedback to staff. In addition, to promote and develop outstanding practice, learning walks, book trawls and conversations with students will provide staff with information to evaluate pupil progress and standards.

All students access the following curriculum provision:

Year 7 and 8: The National Curriculum Foundation Subjects.

The KS3 Foundation Subjects are taught in a two-year phase during a longer taught week of 27 hours (National average 24 hours).

Subject leaders are confident that students cover the curriculum in appropriate depth over the two years. Option subjects begin in Year 9 and are taught until Year 11.

Subjects:

- English Language
- English Literature
- Mathematics
- Science (including triple award)
- History
- Geography
- Religious Studies
- French or Spanish
- Technology
- Art
- Drama
- Music
- Computing
- Physical Education

Our expectation is that all our students take up an Ebacc suite of subjects. They are able to develop their interests by choosing from a wide range of academic and vocational subjects. Students study a total of 10 or 11 subjects (single sciences).

Subjects:

- English Language and English Literature
- Mathematics
- Science double award or three single sciences
- History or Geography
- Spanish or French

With the addition of:

- Physical Education or Dance
- Religious Studies, Sex and Relationship Education and Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education

Plus two from the following:

- Art
- Technology
- Drama
- Music
- Business
- Health and Social Care
- Computer Science

Session 3 Provision: 3.30pm to 5.00pm

Session 3s are open to all students. In some subject areas, those students requiring additional support attend compulsory academic session 3 catch up. This includes specific targeted support for disadvantaged students where needed. Other students may choose to attend academic support to further their progress. Staff have identified students who have found learning during periods of lockdown particularly challenging and session 3s have been used to diminish the difference for these students. A homework club is also offered for students that would prefer to complete work set in school, and this provision also encourages active use of the school library at this time.

In addition the school offers a wide range of sporting, cultural and Performing Arts provision, for example

- Music School (instrumental and voice coaching)
- Drama or Dance Clubs (Arts Nights /School Productions)
- Public Speaking
- Ethical and Debating Societies
- MedSoc
- Use of the Swimming Pool and Fitness Centre
- Use of floodlit pitches for Football and Hockey
- Use of the sports hall and outside PE spaces for Basketball, Netball, Tennis, Cricket, Rounders and Athletics
- The Duke of Edinburgh Award (Bronze – Gold).

Typically, over 1500 students are booked into session 3 activities and fixtures each week.

Sixth Form

The Sixth Form provides for 630 students with a wide provision of academic and vocational courses. The majority of students study three A levels or BTEC programmes (equivalent up to three A levels) or a combination of A levels with BTEC programmes, whilst a small number of students opt to study 4 subjects. The majority of Thomas Telford School Sixth Form students benefit from 3 taught sessions a week in Year 13 and two sessions, with additional remote learning in Year 12.

Students are expected to carry out a period of work experience during their A Level courses and the Careers Education and Guidance Team offers a bespoke road map for every student, in preparation for the next stage of their life, in either Higher Education, employment with training or an apprenticeship. The School ensures that every student, without exception, has a clear progression plan for when they leave our school. The Career's Team promote University visits and organise talks by employers and colleges and during a Wednesday afternoon, sixth form students can access a wide range of sporting and recreational opportunities.