

EPCS Curriculum Overview

Overall vision:

At Easthampstead Park Community School, we aim to develop learners who are happy, healthy and equipped in every way to deal with the challenges and opportunities they will face in their lives beyond school. We aim to instill in students a love of learning which will be life long, allowing them to adapt and flourish in any situation. We seek to develop students who are kind and have a strong sense of community, both locally and globally, able to lead others and bring about positive change. We are very proud of our local area and draw upon it in our curriculum as much as possible. Our links with local businesses including Fujitsu, Johnson & Johnson and Legal and General help ensure our careers advice and guidance is comprehensive and of the highest quality.

Discovery School - KS3:

In Discovery School (Years 7 and 8), students at EPCS follow a broad and balanced curriculum, exposing them to a range of exciting new learning experiences, encouraging them to ask questions and to be intellectually curious. Whilst some students might find their niche in PE, others will be successful in Performing Arts. Whilst some students will flourish in Art and Design, others will thrive on scientific thought and inquiry.

In Year 7, students study an integrated Humanities curriculum, drawing upon aspects of Geography, History, Religious Studies and Citizenship. This cross-curricular, thematic approach allows students to see the bigger picture and engage with big issues such as democracy and society. In Year 8, students build on this firm foundation with discrete lessons in the separate Humanities disciplines.

All teachers at EPCS are teachers of literacy and oracy, and have a responsibility for teaching students to read, write and speak effectively. Students are taught to present and debate, to read to learn and to write for a range of different audiences and purposes in all of their lessons. Similarly, numeracy skills are taught and practiced not just in Maths, but in all of the STEM subjects.

The vast majority of students in Year 7 and 8 study a modern foreign language, either German or Spanish, learning about another culture. Rather than studying a language, a small, select group of students each year have additional 'Project' lessons, focused on supporting them with developing the literacy, numeracy and social skills and self-confidence required to succeed in their wider curriculum. Additional interventions are also provided by our SEN team, focused on accelerating students reading or numeracy ages, or supporting students suffering from social anxiety.

Destiny - KS4

Year 9 at EPCS is a foundation year, designed to support students with making the transition from KS3 to KS4. At the start of Year 9, students join Destiny School, and select pathways ultimately leading to the study of GCSE subjects as they begin Year 10. Empowering students by giving them a degree of choice over their curriculum at this stage results in greater levels of engagement in learning and aims to make them responsible for their own learning. In Year 9, students take time exploring their pathways and are introduced to some of the ideas and concepts they will need to master to be successful at GCSE. Towards the end of Year 9, some students may change subjects ready for the start of GCSE study in earnest.

In addition to their study of English Language and Literature, Maths, Combined Science, Core PE and Citizenship, students make three subject choices. We guide students through this process, encouraging them to study EBacc subjects (Computer Science, History, Geography, German, Spanish). A small group of students each year are guided to select 'Workskills' as one of their choices, a subject designed to support them with developing key life skills. However, whilst we provide guidance, we believe it is vital that students 'own' this process and are provided with an open decision over the subjects they choose.

Key Stage 4 qualifications currently available for students to study:

Core curriculum	Options
GCSE English Language	Triple Science - GCSE Biology, Chemistry and Physics
GCSE English Literature	GCSE History
GCSE Maths	GCSE Geography
GCSE Combined Science	GCSE Spanish
	GCSE German
	GCSE French
	GCSE Fine Art
	GCSE Photography
	GCSE Graphics
	GCSE Computer Science
	GCSE Media Studies
	GCSE 3D Design
	GCSE Business Studies
	BTEC Child Development
	BTEC Hospitality and Catering
	BTEC iMedia
	BTEC Business Studies
	BTEC Sport

EPCS6:

At the end of Year 11, the majority of our students continue into our Sixth Form, studying either three or four A-Level subjects or Level 3 equivalents. We shape our Sixth Form curriculum according to student demand, asking Year 11 students what subjects they are interested in

studying when they apply, before putting together our option blocks. All students studying A-Level subjects sit external exams at the end of Year 13 and internal exams at the end of Year 12, in addition to ongoing assessments within their classes. A small number of EPCS6 students each year undertake our Level 2 'Ready to Work' programme. This one year course is designed to provide students who did not achieve 5 GCSE passes including English and Maths with another attempt at obtaining this important foundation, whilst also developing their softer skills to enable them to succeed in the world of work. Students graduate from this course after one year to either start Level 3 programmes at our school, at local colleges or begin apprenticeships.

Outside of lessons, Sixth Form students at EPCS engage with an exciting programme of enrichment activities, including learning to cook on a budget, taking up a new sport, or learning a new craft. In addition, all Sixth Form students are expected to be regularly engaged in voluntary work in the community. For some students, this might involve helping out in lower school classes, for others, it might involve hearing readers or doing some mentoring in a local primary school. Being a part of our Sixth Form means being a leader in our community, helping others, and being a positive role model. EPCS6 prepares students for their next step, be that at university, in an apprenticeship or in employment academically and socially.

Cross curricular days:

Three times per year, we have collapsed curriculum days which involve all year groups, where teachers from different subject areas work together to provide students with opportunities and experiences beyond that of normal lessons. The days are themed and focused on supporting students with developing vital cross-curricular skills such as teamwork, empathy and resilience. In addition, our cross-curricular days are enriched by a programme of visiting speakers and companies, allowing students to work with representatives from local businesses on enterprise challenges, or learn about our society by interacting with representatives from local public services.

PREP:

All year groups have a 30 minute PREP session at the start of each day, with their form tutor. PREP stands for Prepare, Review, Evaluate, Plan. Through PREP sessions, we aim to cement vital learning skills such as literacy, numeracy, resilience and cooperation. The time provides an opportunity for students to reflect upon their learning from that day, and in other sessions, engage with current affairs and global debates. As students move further up the school, PREP time is also used for subject-based interventions and master classes.

Careers - IAG:

Throughout the school, students are provided with careers advice and a range of opportunities to meet people from various sectors of employment and higher education. Some of this information is delivered to year groups on mass through collapsed curriculum days and PSHE lessons, other opportunities are bespoke and students are encouraged to either opt-in, or targeted at certain groups (for example girls with an interest in careers in STEM.) We enjoy extensive links with a range of local companies who support our Careers-IAG offer, for example, Fujitsu and Johnson and Johnson. To learn more about our careers provision, explore the comprehensive range of information on our school website at www.epschool.org/careers.

Extra curricular opportunities:

Beyond lessons, our curriculum is shaped to provide students across the year groups with a range of additional opportunities to develop their passions and interests. Some students will join school trips to Spain or Germany, or to Art museums in London; some will become heavily involved in school productions and concerts, some will become involved in public speaking and debating competitions or represent the school in sports teams. The vast majority of departments offer at least one extracurricular club, providing a wide menu of choice to our students. We create lots of opportunities for students to lead others and contribute to positive change within the school. Two representatives from each tutor group are voted onto our School Parliament who meet weekly with senior leaders and ensure the views of the student body are heard. Other students are trained as Teaching and Learning Ambassadors, who are trained to observe lessons and provide teachers with feedback. In EPCS6, students can stand to join the Head team, leading the younger years, and contributing to many whole school and community events. Finally, it is our aim that all students at our school are involved in charity, be it through giving time to help others, or through raising money for good causes. We regularly undertake a number of charitable challenges including Readathon, Bag2School and the Christmas Shoebox Appeal.