

The Curriculum at Eckington School

- Eckington School follows the National Curriculum. In key stage 3, students receive lessons in English, mathematics, science, geography, history, a modern language (French or German for all, Mandarin Chinese as a taster for all, Mandarin Chinese in preparation for the HSK level 1 qualification for high attainers), computing, design technology, art, drama, music, physical education, religious education, citizenship and personal, social and health education (PSHE).
- In key stage 4 all students study the following at GCSE level:
 - English
 - Mathematics
 - Science
 - ICT
 - Physical Education
 - PSHE
 - Religious Studies

In addition students choose from a selection of other GCSE subjects:

- Art & Design: Fine Art
 - Art & Design: Photography
 - Computing
 - Design Technology: Resistant Materials
 - Design Technology: Textiles
 - Drama
 - Geography
 - Graphic Products
 - Health & Social Care
 - History
 - Hospitality and Catering
 - Media Studies
 - Modern Languages: French
 - Modern Languages: German
 - Music
 - Physical Education
- Eckington School has a pathways curriculum in both key stage 3 and 4. Approximately 60% of students follow pathway A and 40% pathway B. The purpose of our pathway curriculum is to provide flexibility in terms of the curriculum diet our students receive whilst still ensuring that their entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum is maintained.
- Since 2011 the key stage 3 curriculum has been enhanced by the additional time provided to pathway B students in English and mathematics. Pathway B students in year 7 receive 9 periods of English a week, compared to 4 in pathway A. Pathway B students in year 8 receive 9 periods of mathematics, compared to 4 in pathway A. We have collected data which shows clearly how this has accelerated progress.
- Key stage 3 literacy is also enhanced through a variety of methods such as Hodder reading schemes; a buddy reading programme; a comprehensive literacy, spelling, punctuation and grammar programme; writing mats in English and humanities; a policy of writing enrichment in English; weekly spelling tests; frequent viewing of the news using Discovery Education in form time; an emphasis on key words in lessons; and an enhanced reading programme which pushes students to read up to 24 books per year. From September 2015, we are introducing our KS3 six challenges in independent learning in English. This pulls together existing initiatives and offers some new ideas. The six challenges (outlined in students' planners) are:

1. The Reading Challenge
(Students are rewarded with badges and prizes as they progress through a recommended reading list compiled by our librarian and the English Department).
2. The Comprehension Challenge
(Students complete ten lengthy comprehension exercises each year).
3. The Spelling Challenge
(Students learn for their weekly spelling test a list of words in their planners).
4. The SPAG Challenge
(At home or in lesson students' work through thirty-nine 'chapters' of SPAG exercised over a two-year period).
5. The NICE Writing Challenge
(The acronym stands for Neat, Interesting, Clear, Edited. When teachers see evidence of these features in students' extended writing they credit students with rewards).
6. The Decoding Challenge
(This involves students passing through a small group programme of teaching which focuses on phonetics and language awareness. As this is a particularly tough challenge it may be done in Year 9).

- Student progress planners have been re-branded as literacy guides, with strategies to support students in becoming GCSE-ready readers and writers. Eckington School has a dedicated Literacy Coordinator to oversee these activities. Furthermore, our flexible learning days provide all students with deep learning in literacy activities such as the Roald Dahl and BBC School Report days in year 7, the Geography Project activity in year 8 and the Holocaust activity in year 9.
- Our links to the Sitwell Trust enable us to take part in the Derbyshire Young Poets competition and invite established writers to school to deliver reading/writing master classes.
- In key stage 4, the curriculum is designed to give all students a substantial amount of curriculum time focusing on English and mathematics to ensure all students make at least good progress. Over one third of a student's weekly curriculum diet is given to English and mathematics. Our middle and lower ability students have now embarked on the more accessible IGCSE English qualification.
- In order to promote a broad and balanced curriculum and to encourage the take up of a modern foreign language, the curriculum is designed to give substantial time to language and humanities teaching for all pathway A key stage 3 students. All students at Eckington School study one language and geography and history in key stage 3; all students are required to continue with the study of a humanities subject in key stage 4. Our take-up rate for a modern foreign language is consistent at approximately 25%: this is up from 13% in 2010 prior to this development.
- This drive to improve both our take up rate for and the attainment of our students in modern languages is also supported by our 4 enhanced languages groups: tutor groups led by a modern languages teacher where registrations, pastoral lessons and routine conversations take place in the target language of French or German. This is in addition to their 'normal' modern languages lessons and the opportunity to participate in our successful German exchange programme or extra-curricular visits to France. A third modern language, Mandarin Chinese is also offered to all of our key stage 3 students and as an extra-curricular activity to older students. A Chinese exchange programme is now in place for the benefit of our students.
- We recently changed our early entry policy for enhanced French and German students. We no longer enter these students for GCSE at the end of year 9 (and AS Level at the end of year

11). This change in entry policy means that our Y11 French and German enhanced students are working generally at GCSE A*/A grade in the autumn term of year 11.

- Our curriculum encourages students to develop creativity, key skills, enterprise and financial awareness. Our Performing Arts faculty offers courses in art, drama, music and photography, with accreditation through GCSE and A level. The success of this faculty is recognised by the silver Arts Mark held by the school. Cambridge Nationals in ICT and the targeted use of ASDAN and CoPE enhance key skills. Eckington School has been awarded Career Mark in recognition of the way the school prepares students for their next steps in education, training or employment.
- Eckington School has a calendared programme of Flexible Learning Days distributed throughout the year designed to enhance the curriculum for our students. These days provide for deep learning and/or immersive activities in subjects or provide intense intervention for targeted individuals. The range of activities on offer include engineering activities such as the solar buggy challenge, humanities themed days such as the Geography Project and Holocaust history activities), literacy, enterprise and citizenship themed days, as well as our annual Health Day and work shadowing days.
- The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is also good and is delivered as both part of the taught curriculum and through enrichment opportunities. Religious education, citizenship and PSHE are part of our core curriculum and in key stage 4 all students follow GCSE religious studies. RE is led by a specialist teacher and delivered by form tutors in key stage 3 and a small, dedicated team in key stage 4 (our plans for 2014/15 will ensure that all RE is taught by humanities specialists); the course allows students to reflect on the big moral, ethical and philosophical questions which the major world religions seek to address. Conscious of the limited ethnic and religious diversity within our school, we have sought to address this by providing enrichment activities that allow our students to have experiences beyond their predominantly white British and Christian backgrounds. As part of their studies, key stage 3 students visit places of worship and meet members of different communities, and year 10 students follow the Big Question programme, where students pose moral, ethical and philosophical questions to faith leaders to answer in assemblies. Our PSHE coordinator is currently building into programmes key lessons on radicalisation and extremism. For 2015/16 our citizenship programme will be even more closely aligned to British Values.
- A comprehensive and progressive PSHE programme is delivered by all form tutors. Eckington School's successful provision of careers education and information, advice and guidance is further evidenced by the re-designation of the Career Mark award in 2014, marking the fourth time we have held the award. The assessor recognised the comprehensive and effective provision offered by: the PSHE programme; careers information evenings; work experience; a proactive and independent careers adviser. Students are individually targeted as early as year 8 in an effort to engage young people and ensure that they progress into education, training or employment. Of our 2013 leavers at the end of year 11, only 2 were not in education, training or employment by the spring of 2014; this is less than 1%.
- Another example of our flexible curriculum being modified to meet the needs of individuals and groups of students is in our key stage 4 alternative curriculum. For a very small number of students who find the daily routines of school life a challenge and have disengaged or are at danger of disengaging from school life, a curriculum is designed to meet their needs. Students concentrate on achieving GCSEs in English, mathematics and science, as well as a range of other foundation, level 1 and level 2 qualifications. The curriculum for these students is designed to be engaging and is enhanced through collaboration with other learning providers and work experience placements, which can offer a range of courses that Eckington School does not have the resources to offer.

- Our Able and Talented cohort are catered for via a tailored enrichment programme consisting of visiting speakers (university students, local professionals and entrepreneurs, Russell Group representatives and a member of the House of Lords), student visits (local universities, galleries and museums and the Palace of Westminster), literacy (students newspaper) and enterprise activities, to name but a few aspects. We have designated able and talented form groups in key stage 4 with the purpose of fostering a culture of achievement and to maximise students' potential through focused stretch and challenge.
- Eckington School holds full 'National Healthy Schools Status'. The visiting assessor complemented in particular:
 - The effectiveness of the PSHE programme in addressing all health issues (from road safety to alcohol and drug misuse, from stress to STIs);
 - The improved attitudes of students towards healthy eating, the importance of consuming lots of water and the need for regular physical exercise.
 - The fact that the school surveyed students on their physical activity preferences and participation and altered the extra-curricular offer as a consequence.
 - The programme of Health Days which involve other agencies (local health professionals, the police, sports and fitness instructors, Connexions, etc).
- The Physical Education department offers a range of activities at lunchtime and afterschool. Some of these activities are delivered by students on our Sports Leaders programme. The Duke of Edinburgh programme caters for over 100 students.
- Apart from our comprehensive sports offer there are a host of enrichment activities delivered across the school (in part by our specialist areas). These activities benefit our students, their parents and the community at large. Below is a sample:
 - Our House system allows for a range of extra-curricular and other enrichment opportunities such as the annual mini-Olympics, a pre-published competition calendar with a range of team events from inter-house football to inter-house science challenges. Another aspect of the House system is that each house has a 'charity captain' who leads representative from each form in a charity group. These groups raise money for charities which interest our students.
 - An Activities Week where our students participated in a range of artistic, cultural and sporting opportunities. Activities ranged from overseas visits, including France, Germany, Greece and Spain, cultural visits to London, theatres and museums, and sporting activities including climbing, cycling and orienteering. In 2014, 76% of students made an active choice to participate in one or more of these activities, indicating willingness to participate in activities requiring social skills and to embrace new experiences which broaden their outlook.
 - Eckington School fully embraced the 2012 London Olympics and the 21st Century Legacy mentoring programme aimed at encouraging our students to "be the best you can be". With a special focus on our Year 8 students, tutors use the G.R.O.W. model of mentoring to improve the performance (social, academic, physical) of our students.
 - As part of our Pledges programme we ask students to 'achieve' three pledges each academic year (a number of which are lifted from the citizenship programme of study).
 - In 2013/14, 27 year 11 students took part in the National Citizen Service. This voluntary, extra-curricular programme brings together young people from different backgrounds and helps them develop greater confidence, self-awareness and responsibility. It encourages personal and social development by working on skills like leadership, teamwork and communication. Participants develop a social action project to deal with a local issue they're passionate about, and spend 30 hours putting the project into action in their community.
- Participation in these enrichment activities is monitored by the participation surveys conducted annually. These show very healthy participation rates in a wide range of activities.

- Please note: In Appendix A (below) are listed the Heads of Department across the school. Under the [Curriculum Section](#) of the school website, we detail the contents of our range of courses including the exam boards used.

Appendix A

For further information, please contact the Leader of Teaching and Learning for each subject:

English:	Hannah Burton	hannahb144@eckington.derbyshire.sch.uk
Mathematics:	Lynne Williams	lwilliams3@eckington.derbyshire.sch.uk
Science:	Lesley Brooke	lbrooke@eckington.derbyshire.sch.uk
Art	Helena Partridge	hpartridge@eckington.derbyshire.sch.uk
Computer Science:	Eric Knutsen	erick1@eckington.derbyshire.sch.uk
Drama:	Katherine Needham	kneedham2@eckington.derbyshire.sch.uk
Food Technology:	Elizabeth Lee	elee3@eckington.derbyshire.sch.uk
Film Studies:	Rachel Lee	rlee9@eckington.derbyshire.sch.uk
French:	Sarah Siddons	ssiddons@eckington.derbyshire.sch.uk
Geography	Adrian Wilks	awilks1@eckington.derbyshire.sch.uk
Geology:	Adrian Wilks	awilks1@eckington.derbyshire.sch.uk
German:	Louise Staley	lstaley@eckington.derbyshire.sch.uk
Graphic Products:	Peter Stokes	pstokes1@eckington.derbyshire.sch.uk
Health & Social Care:	Cara Thompson	thompsonc@eckington.derbyshire.sch.uk
History:	Evangeline Bell	ebell1@eckington.derbyshire.sch.uk
Hospitality & Catering:	Elizabeth Lee	elee3@eckington.derbyshire.sch.uk
ICT:	Eric Knutsen	erick1@eckington.derbyshire.sch.uk
Law:	Evangeline Bell	ebell1@eckington.derbyshire.sch.uk
Media Studies:	Rachel Lee	rlee9@eckington.derbyshire.sch.uk
Music:	Natasha Miller	nmiller@eckington.derbyshire.sch.uk
PSHE & Careers:	Andrea Roberts	aroberts4@eckington.derbyshire.sch.uk
Physical Education:	Sally Clarke	sclarke12@eckington.derbyshire.sch.uk
Photography:	Helena Partridge	hpartridge@eckington.derbyshire.sch.uk
Psychology:	Cara Thompson	thompsonc@eckington.derbyshire.sch.uk
Religious Education:	Robert Savage	rsavage@eckington.derbyshire.sch.uk
Resistant Materials:	Peter Stokes	pstokes1@eckington.derbyshire.sch.uk
Sociology:	Cara Thompson	thompsonc@eckington.derbyshire.sch.uk
Textiles Technology:	Hilary Dixon	hdixon@eckington.derbyshire.sch.uk
Theatre Studies:	Katherine Needham	kneedham2@eckington.derbyshire.sch.uk