



# Dronfield Henry Fanshawe School

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*Success with Care*

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## Alteration to Y9 Curriculum 2023-24 – Reduction of PE Time

### Curriculum Overview

Schools have the responsibility to establish their curriculum for all key stages and all cohorts. Local Authority maintained schools, such as DHFS, have to implement the national curriculum whereas Academies have greater flexibility and freedom over their curriculum choices. Within the parameters set out by the National Curriculum, our curriculum reflects the vision of the school, our core principles and our curriculum statement.

### Curriculum Context

Each year, the school reviews the curriculum structure for all key stages in light of feedback, internal reviews, external reviews and any statutory changes at national level. Student, staff and parent, carer voice regarding the curriculum is considered and factored into decision making. This feedback is received through various mechanisms such as surveys, questionnaires and whole school reviews, for instance, the Kirkland Rowell survey. This ensures there is a mechanism for input from different stakeholders. Changes to the curriculum can happen regularly as a consequence.

### Broad and Balanced Curriculum

As part of their strategic vision, Governors ensure the school has a broad and balanced curriculum that delivers all national curriculum subjects and the agreed syllabus for RE. The allocation of lesson time to individual subjects is decided within school and inevitably there are different models that can be adopted. This can lead to local schools having different curricula in place.

### Statutory Changes to the PSHE Curriculum

In September 2020 new statutory requirements for Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), which we deliver through the PSHE curriculum, came into force. At this time the school's curriculum plan did not meet the requirement and therefore a review was undertaken. The school had to make changes to meet the new national statutory requirements.

The additional learning time allocated to PSHE meant a reduction for other subjects. Following internal reviews, the decision was taken in Key Stage 3 to reduce technology, MFL, English, maths and science. At this point the decision was taken to not reduce PE time. All of these named subjects are the only ones to have multiple lessons in a week. All other subjects are taught for only 1 hour per week and therefore any reductions for these subjects would result in them being totally removed from the curriculum.

These plans have been implemented for a period of time and have been monitored and reviewed. It is clear that the Y9 model is not as strong as we would like it to be and therefore the use of English, maths and science lessons on a carousel needed to be replaced. Following discussions with various staff and consideration of different feedback the difficult decision was taken to reduce Y9 PE for 2023-24. All other multiple lesson subjects have had reduced time already since 2020.

### **Supporting a Healthy Student Population**

Some concerns have been raised about losing PE time due to the importance of this area for supporting a healthy student population. Whilst it is accepted that students have less timetabled time for PE the school continues to promote and support healthy living through a variety of different mechanisms. Firstly, the school's wider curriculum offers a multitude of experiences and opportunities. This includes sports such as table tennis, netball, badminton, football and basketball. In addition, the school runs a number of inter-house competitions throughout the year overseen by the PE faculty.

Away from the PE curriculum and wider enrichment offer the school supports healthy lifestyles through the mentor programme, the assembly programme, the PSHE curriculum and many other subject curricula. Within technology for example the students experience food and nutrition courses across different year groups. The school also make good use of competitions either run by the school or externally that involves supporting healthy lifestyles. All of these areas have the overall objective of ensuring a positive approach to a healthy life celebrating enjoyment and promoting positive mental health whilst addressing a growing obesity issue in society.

### **A Planned Spiral Curriculum**

The school's planned curriculum spirals so that students return to prior learning and build on their knowledge, understanding and skills base. Any changes to the curriculum time that is given to subject areas will not disadvantage students as individual faculties will modify their planned curriculum accordingly. This means that preparation for KS4 is not compromised by changes at KS3. This proved to be the case with the changes to technology, MFL, English, maths and science in the past and we are confident that it will be the same for PE moving forward.

### **Differing Viewpoints**

The school accepts that there are different view points on how time should be allocated and that not all decisions will be popular with varying groups. The school will always take a balanced approach to decision making to ensure that a high-quality education provision is in place for all students. The students who have raised their concerns are to be commended not only in the manner in which they have approached the issue but in their skills of communication and the passion that they have demonstrated throughout the meetings and other forms of discourse.

### **Next Steps**

Consideration has been given to a number of factors and the difficult decision has been taken that the reduction of PE to one lesson for Y9 next year will remain. The timetable has been written, the staffing structure has been implemented and recruitment completed. The PE and PSHE faculties have reviewed and redesigned their curricula accordingly and are prepared to deliver outstanding subject experiences for the students. I appreciate that this will cause disappointment for some members of the school community and I apologise for this.

The feedback that has been provided from parents, carers, staff, students, governors and various documents that have been circulated, including the petition, are all valuable pieces of information which will be retained and included in the fuller curriculum review next autumn.