

Curriculum

The JMHS curriculum has developed around 4 “key stages” with a two year Key Stage 3, a transition Year 9, KS4 and KS5. Within the first stage all students follow a core curriculum as well as a combined humanities course (including Citizenship and RE) a combined Performing Arts lesson, a DT carousel, Music, Art, PE, ICT and access to the study of one Modern Foreign Language (either French, German or Spanish) There is a mix of setting and mixed ability teaching within this model. Top set linguists are able to take on a second language in Year 8

During Year 9 students have the opportunity to choose up to 4 options which includes the opportunity to study just one DT discipline, Music, continue with a second language or take on additional Historical or Geographical studies to compliment the core humanities programme. These courses do not take on GCSE syllabus material but do offer a “bridging experience” between KS3 and 4. Year 9 students continue to study Drama (as a one hour a week part of the English curriculum) and can choose to study Dance as part of their core PE provision. ICT and PE continue to form part of the core curriculum for all students.

In Year 10/11 students all follow 4 option choices on top of their core curriculum (English, Maths, Science, RE/Citizenship and PE) Normally approx. 60 students choose to take on a Triple Science pathway. The school operates a free choice system for GCSE options but have prioritised the ability to study for English Baccalaureate with all students not in the “Access curriculum” studying at least one humanities subject. The school has maintained a good balance between Vocational BTEC accreditations and traditional GCSE’s and in some cases can complete both accreditation types in the same option. A small number of students complete Music or Art GCSE as an after school enrichment opportunity.

Each year a small number of KS4 students as reported in a 2012 Ofsted report pursue an alternative curriculum, which involves them working with outside vocational training partners one day a week. Most of these students drop up to two school based options to enable this. Non contact periods for these students are used by the Support team to either provide further skills support or in some cases take on extended work experience placements or complete the BTEC Workskills award.

The school SENCO leads a team of teachers who look to adapt the curriculum for our Access groups within the core subjects. By developing separate schemes of work and building in more skills development and interventions they look to create a more appropriate curriculum through which all students can achieve.

A series of “Challenge days” take place across the school year which allow us to provide a cultural and enterprise entitlement for all students. Days can take the form of a series of workshops in school or often trips and enquiries out in the “field”. It also allows some option subjects extended project time with KS 4 students and indeed some core subjects to run key controlled assessments or skills/revision boosters.

Homework is set weekly as part of the curriculum across the whole school in core subjects. At KS3 students take on “extended learning homework projects” designed in turn each half term by the Humanities, Arts and Technology faculties. These projects are designed to foster independent study

skills and help engage students in the learning process by building in a lot of choice and self design into the process.

The PSHE curriculum is taught by tutor teams to their own tutor groups. A PSHE coordinator in school working alongside the IAG team ensure that there is age appropriate coverage of health, relationships and careers education at each stage. Students are able to meet employers as part of the programme particularly at KS 4 as well as undergo “Heart Start” emergency aid training. A work related learning coordinator based in the support centre is tasked with supporting faculties in making employer links as part of their “scheme” planning as well as support the whole IAG and work experience programme at KS4 for example coordinating compulsory work elements in some of our more vocational courses. The same coordinator works alongside our Sports and Arts faculties to run a Year 11 enrichment programme on Friday afternoons which involves a wide range of on site and out of school activities.

The school has successfully timetabled a “period 6” on a Tuesday (providing transport solutions as well) which has allowed students to study more than one language at KS3 and take on the triple Science pathway at KS 4 without limiting choice or reducing core hours in the main curriculum.

Progression into KS 5 is considered carefully with students able to take on KS 4 subjects further on site in the vast majority of subjects. At KS5 students also encounter a considerable choice of new subjects if they wish such as Health and Social Care, Psychology, Media studies, and Public services.