

Curriculum Intent Policy

2026/28

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1. Introduction

As a specialist Sport and Performing Arts Studio school, our aim is for every learner to be able to move seamlessly from LEAF Studio School into employment, professional performance, or university, equipped with the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding to purposefully engage in all of the challenges and opportunities they will experience.

Every student who is successful at gaining a place within either our Sport or Performing Arts specialism has to balance dedicated, specialist training with a range of academic qualifications. Our key focus is on Dual Careers – we know that the vast majority of our students will need strong academic grades alongside their specialism qualifications as they progress through their careers.

With this in mind, at Key Stage Four (KS4) we offer the core GCSE subjects including Maths, English and Science alongside our specialisms. Students select from a range of options more relevant to their chosen specialism that are designed to best support their future career progression. Our expectations of academic lessons are the same as at any mainstream school – we expect all of our performers to be as committed to these as they are to their specialisms and the school has a continued focus on delivering quality first teaching and learning across the school.

At Key Stage Five (KS5), the vast majority of students will complete a triple BTEC in their specialisms but there is also the opportunity to study academic A-level(s) alongside. In addition to this, all students undertake additional Strength and Conditioning sessions to support their specialism training as well as undertaking a comprehensive Professional Development programme to prepare them for a future career within their chosen industry. For Sport, we were the first secondary school in the country to be selected for the TASS Dual Career Accreditation Scheme which recognises an education institution's commitment to dual career support for talented athletes who are in full time education and since 2020, LEAF have been part of the European Network of Sports Schools (ENOSS). We were the first school in the UK to be accredited. This enables us to provide greater links, research opportunities and exchanges with other schools around Europe that offer the same provision as LEAF Studio.

2. Curriculum Implementation – KS4

Students transition to LEAF Studio in Year 9 from across Dorset, Hampshire, and Wiltshire. Our students study English, Maths & Science as core subjects along with two specialism options.

Year 9 is used as a consolidation year to bridge the gap between the key skills taught in years 7 & 8 from the variety of schools and locations from which they have transitioned, this is designed to ensure the students have what they need in order to be better prepared for their GCSEs.

In years 9 and 10, our students study English Literature, English Language, Maths and Science (Trilogy) for 5 lessons each a week. Each Specialism option block has 2 lessons per week and over 1 hour a week during tutor time is allocated for Professional Development covering topics which make them a rounded individual such as Careers, British Values, Sexual Health, etc. To add to this, students have 6 lessons of technical training linked to their specialism per week.

In year 11, the curriculum model changes slightly by increasing the specialism option blocks to 3 lessons per week by reducing technical training as well as having 1-2-1 support to assist students who are struggling. We also deliver a range of small group interventions to support students with both Maths and English in Year 11 during technical training. The option subjects we offer are:

Specialism:

- Dance
- Drama
- Music
- Music Technology
- GCSE PE
- Sport Science

3. Curriculum Implementation – KS5

Both internal and external students transition into KS5 with a clear specialism in either sport or performing arts still with their main aim to be fully or part of their future career. Each student will study Level 3 BTEC in their specialism up to the 3 A Level equivalent. Should a student wish, there is an option to study the 2 A Level equivalent with an A Level.

The subjects we offer are:

3.1. Specialism:

- BTEC Sport
- BTEC Performing Arts

3.2. A Levels:

- Biology
- English Literature & Language combined
- Psychology
- Film Studies

4. Curriculum Hours by Key Stage

The following tables represent the expectations of the curriculum model. These are based upon a 25-hour timetable.

4.1. Years 9 & 10

Subject	Lessons	% of the Curriculum
English	5	20
Maths	5	20
Science	5	20
Specialism 1	2	8
Specialism 2	2	8
Professional Development	Tutor	10
Technical specialism training	6	24
Yr10 only – work placement	5 days	

4.2. Year 11

Subject	Lessons	% of the Curriculum
English	5	20
Maths	5	20
Science	5	20
Specialism 1	3	12
Specialism 2	3	12
Professional Development / core intervention	Tutor	10
Technical specialism training	4	16

4.3. Year 12 & 13

Subject	Lessons	% of the Curriculum
BTEC Specialism – extended diploma	15	60
BTEC Specialism – diploma	10	40
Academic A-level	5	20
Technical Training	5 (min)	16
Work placement	10 – 45 days per year	

5. Learning Journeys

LEAF Studio use Learning Journeys as a tool for both staff and students to clearly sequence their curriculum provision. They guide the development of knowledge; the key skills required for learning are identified and the learning journeys give a clear overview of the topics being studied throughout their time at LEAF Studio.

The Learning Journey enables us to contextualise what is being studied; endorsing cross-curricular links highlighted in gold. Students are aware through the Learning Journey why they are learning the topics, how they fit within the exam syllabus but most importantly, skills linking to lifelong learning.

Each subject's Learning Journey can be found below:

- [Careers](#)
- [KS4 PSHE / RSHE](#)
- [KS4 PSHE / RSHE / Personal Development Overview](#)
- [Sixth Form PSHE / RSHE / Personal Development Overview](#)

Key Stage 4	Sixth Form
• Music Tech • Dance • Drama • GCSE PE • Maths Foundation • Maths Higher • Music • Science Year 9 • English	• Psychology • BTEC Performing Arts • BTEC Sport • English • Biology