

## Oxford International Year-Round Schools

### Curriculum Policy

#### 1. Purpose

This Curriculum Policy outlines the academic framework, structure and rationale underpinning teaching and learning across Oxford International Year-Round Schools (YRS). It supports both teachers and students by clearly defining expectations, standards and quality assurance processes.

The policy reflects the organisation's mission:

To create life-enhancing learning experiences that help students worldwide develop personally and professionally and enrich their future opportunities.

Our Core Values underpin the curriculum:

- **Integrity** – Building relationships through trust, honesty and respect
- **Passion & Pride** – Striving for excellence
- **Care** – Placing students and their goals at the centre of our work
- **Creativity** – Encouraging innovation and embracing difference
- **Smile** – Because it goes a long way

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#### 2. Academic Framework

The Academic Framework defines our teaching approach and expectations for classroom practice.

##### All lessons should:

- Have clear, measurable objectives
- Be student-centred
- Deliver observable learning outcomes
- Integrate communicative and mediation skills, enabling learners to negotiate meaning, adapt language appropriately and facilitate understanding in real-world contexts

##### Lesson activities should:

- Clearly support lesson objectives
- Provide opportunities for emergent language
- Balance accuracy and fluency
- Promote communicative, realistic language use

##### Lessons should:

- Be well staged with appropriate timing and pace
- Demonstrate clear progression
- Include varied interaction patterns (whole class, pair, group, individual work)
- Ensure active participation from all students
- Promote learner autonomy and independent study skills
- Develop 21st-century skills (critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, communication)

##### Teacher Responsibilities

Teachers are expected to:

- Maintain appropriate teacher talking time
  - Use English as the primary classroom language
  - Adjust language appropriately to learner level
  - Provide clear instructions and feedback
  - Use effective error correction strategies
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- Uphold and promote fundamental British values
- Report concerns in line with safeguarding and Prevent procedures

### **Classroom Environment**

The learning environment should:

- Demonstrate positive rapport
  - Be inclusive and supportive
  - Promote mutual respect and tolerance
  - Encourage learner self-awareness and autonomy
  - Make effective use of teaching resources
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## **3. Syllabus Rationale and Structure**

### **3.1 Syllabus Aim**

Oxford International year-round schools (YRS) provides a clearly defined academic system designed to:

- Guarantee appropriate level placement and progression
- Ensure consistency in content and standards
- Support structured learner development
- Respond to individual and group needs
- Maintain flexibility within continuous enrolment

### **3.2 Syllabus Definition**

Each level syllabus:

- Aligns to CEFR 'Can Do' descriptors
- Identifies core skills and language systems
- Is supported by a designated coursebook
- Provides guidance on expected outcomes
- Allows smooth student movement between classes

The basic planning unit is one week, enabling continuous enrolment while maintaining structured progression.

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## **4. Structure of the Academic Year**

The academic year consists of four terms (12–13 weeks each).

Adult timetable: 09:00–14:30; (AM 9-12.15 LT Electives 13:00 – 14:30)

Junior timetable: Between 09:00–18:00 operating on a zig zag when busy and in the summer

### **4.1 Morning Classes**

Morning classes include:

- General English
- IELTS preparation (subject to demand)

Courses follow a coursebook-based syllabus aligned to CEFR levels.

### **4.2 Electives**

Electives allow students to tailor learning according to interest and need.

These include:

- Essential Skills electives (reading, writing, listening, speaking, pronunciation)
  - Project-based electives focused on real-life and functional language
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- Context-based learning including visits to local businesses (where appropriate)
- Some schools run an IELTS option (on demand)

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## 5. Digital Learning Platforms

As part of our ongoing commitment to delivering high-quality, engaging and future-focused English language provision, the school is transitioning from the GEL Virtual Learning Campus (VLC) to Spark (National Geographic Learning) as our primary digital learning platform. This change reflects our intention to streamline digital provision, enhance learner engagement, and align more closely with our current coursebook and curriculum framework.

### Previous Platform: Virtual Learning Campus (VLC)

The VLC supported blended learning by:

- Providing weekly lesson planning visibility
- Hosting assignments and homework
- Displaying progress tracking through visual analytics
- Offering levelled self-study resources
- Supporting pre-arrival administration

### Current Platform: Spark (National Geographic Learning)

Spark now underpins our digital provision and complements the General English syllabus through:

- Fully integrated interactive course content
- Audio, video and multimedia resources embedded within lessons
- Automatic marking and instant learner feedback
- Supplementary grammar, vocabulary and skills practice
- Teacher planning tools and classroom presentation resources

The move to Spark enables greater integration between classroom teaching and independent study, provides clearer learner progression pathways, and ensures consistency between printed materials and digital delivery. This supports our strategic aim of delivering engaging, measurable and pedagogically robust learning experiences for all students.

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## 6. Measurement of Student Progress

Student progress is monitored through structured short-term and long-term measures, combining formative assessment, formal testing and individual review.

### Initial Assessment

All students complete an online grammar and vocabulary test, a writing task and a speaking assessment incorporating a needs analysis. Results inform accurate placement and are stored for reference throughout the course.

### Ongoing Classroom Assessment

Progress is monitored daily through formative assessment linked to clearly defined lesson objectives. Teachers regularly revisit previously taught content to ensure consolidation and use observation, questioning and task performance to inform planning and support.

### Progress Testing

Students complete regular progress tests to assess recently studied language systems. Language skills are assessed in rotation in accordance with the course syllabus, ensuring all four skills are reviewed within a structured cycle. These assessments help identify areas for further development and inform level progression decisions.

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## Tutorials and Target Setting

At fortnightly tutorials (or monthly for some long-term students), learners meet individually with the Academic Manager to review progress and complete a self-assessment. Clear, achievable targets are agreed for the following period, and students may be referred to Academic Support where appropriate.

## Level Movement

Progression to a higher level is based on teacher observation, assessment outcomes and consultation with the Director of Studies. Where necessary, a barrier test may be administered to ensure fair and accurate placement. Students are actively involved in reviewing their progress and setting development goals throughout their course.

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## 7. Academic Support

Academic Support provides targeted assistance to students who are not progressing as expected or who wish to focus on specific areas of their language development. It also aims to strengthen learner awareness and encourage greater responsibility for independent study.

Students may be referred by the Academic Manager or self-refer. The Academic Support tutor works with the student to identify clear goals and develops a tailored programme of guided self-study and supplementary learning activities. Progress is monitored through an Academic Logs, which records agreed targets and outcomes and is shared with relevant teaching staff to ensure continuity and alignment with classroom learning.

Academic Support sessions are scheduled according to the structure of each Oxford International school.

Academic Support assists students who:

- Require additional support
- Feel they are not progressing sufficiently
- Wish to focus on specific language areas

Support may include:

- Structured self-study plans
- Targeted learning strategies
- Monitoring through Academic Support logs

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## 8. End-of-Course Reporting and Certification

Students who achieve a minimum of 80% attendance receive:

- Certificate of attendance
- Personalised academic report (for courses of two weeks or more)

Reports combine qualitative feedback and quantitative progress data.

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## 9. Junior Curriculum

### Definition of a Junior Student

Junior students are typically aged 12–17. A dedicated syllabus has been designed specifically to meet the linguistic, cognitive and motivational needs of teenage learners. Students aged 16–18 may be placed in adult classes where appropriate, depending on level, maturity and group composition.

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## Placement and Class Formation

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At the beginning of their stay, junior students complete a structured placement procedure consisting of multiple-choice grammar and vocabulary questions, a short written task and a brief oral assessment. The results inform class formation, level allocation and selection of appropriate syllabus materials.

Where groups are closed cohorts, testing is used to differentiate levels within the group when more than one class is required.

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### **Structure of the Syllabus**

The Junior syllabus is designed in-house consists of two complementary strands: core syllabus lessons and culture-focused lessons.

Syllabus lessons are available at Elementary, Pre-Intermediate, Intermediate, Upper-Intermediate and Advanced levels. Each level includes a structured bank of prepared 90-minute lessons covering skills development, grammar and functional language. For each level, two books are available containing up to 24 lessons, enabling flexibility depending on course length.

Each lesson package includes:

- A detailed lesson plan outlining aims and staging
- An ideas bank providing methodological guidance
- Prepared teaching materials (texts, handouts, flashcards and task-based resources)
- A student workbook aligned to the level

This structure ensures consistency of delivery while allowing teachers flexibility to respond to group needs.

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### **Student Workbook and Learner Development**

Each junior student receives a workbook at the start of their course. The workbook supports structured language practice and includes reflective elements designed to promote learner awareness and independence.

During induction, students complete a reflective task entitled "*English and You*", which encourages them to consider their motivations for learning English and personal goals. An identical reflection is completed at the end of the course, enabling learners to evaluate their progress and overall experience.

Students are encouraged to record new vocabulary throughout the course and are guided on how to continue developing their English after returning home. This focus on reflection and independent learning supports both language development and personal growth.

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### **Assessment, Reporting and Certification**

Throughout their course, junior students receive ongoing formative assessment. At the end of their stay, groups may request personalised reports written by the teacher. Reports combine qualitative feedback with scaled evaluation to ensure clarity for parents with varying levels of English proficiency.

All students receive a certificate of attendance specifying course and level and where possible celebrate with a cap & gown.

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