

**ST. DAVID'S HIGH  
SCHOOL**

**ESSENTIAL SKILLS  
POLICY**

**Reviewed by Governors  
September 2021**



## **ESSENTIAL SKILLS POLICY**

### **Definitions**

Essential Skills are defined

as: Core Essential Skills

- *Communication*
- *Application of Number (AON)*
- *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)*

Wider Essential Skills

- *Problem solving*
- *Improving own learning and performance (IOLJP)*
- *Working with others*

*Essential Skills are those transferable skills which are most commonly needed to succeed in a range of activities in education and training, at work and in everyday life.'*

Essential Skills have superseded both Key and Basic Skills for Communication, AoN and ICT as of September 2010. The wider Key Skills will be replaced by 2012, but for the purposes of this document are considered to be Essential Skills.

### **Purpose**

St David's High School is committed to providing an Essential Skills programme to support learner progression and achievement. This policy will ensure that learners' experience is relevant to their needs and develops their skills.

### **Principles**

- 1.1 All students will have the opportunity during Key Stage 3 to follow a programme that will be used to provide Essential skills development, tutorial and enrichment. The Essential skill component will focus on the development of all the Essential skills up to level 1 of National Qualifications Framework, the level at which students are recognised as attaining the Basic Skill requirement.
- 1.2 On entry to St David's, all students will receive a diagnostic assessment to determine their development needs for successful outcomes for their specified Essential Skills programme.
- 1.4 Where students are pursuing an Essential skills qualification, they will be registered with WJEC, an approved awarding body.
- 1.5 Students will continue to develop their Essential skills as they progress in school through cross-curricular programmes, though these will not be formally assessed in Key Stage 3.
- 1.6 Targeted students that require support for Essential Skills up to level 1 will receive a cross-curricular programme that will focus on Literacy and Numeracy. This will be supported by the Additional Needs department as necessary.

## Procedures

- 2.1 Through all years in all lessons Essential Skills will be delivered through the St David's skills strategy. The strategy decomposes the Essential Skills into simplified statements and allows assessment against specific criteria. A requirement is that all faculty schemes of work identify opportunities for the delivery of Essential Skills.
- 2.2 During Year 7 all students will follow the Discovery programme that will lead directly to a portfolio of work targeted at level 1. The Communication, AoN and ICT work will be internally assessed. Where appropriate, the evidence for the wider Essential Skills may be assessed and accredited by WJEC.
- 2.3 Essential Skills at Key Stage 4 is delivered as an integral part of the Welsh Baccalaureate (WBQ). Through the WBQ all students will aim to build a portfolio of evidential work that will be assessed and accredited by WJEC at levels 1 and 2 as appropriate.
- 2.4 Further reinforcement of Essential Skills is delivered in year 10 by tutors using *SureSkill* in tutor time.
- 2.5 The organisation of internal verification will be the responsibility of the Essential Skills Co-ordinator (ESCo) delivered with a dedicated team of Essential Skills assessors, including tutors, the Discovery team and the WBQ team, whose role is to monitor, advise on and verify Essential Skills delivery.
- 2.6 External test entry time frames, central co-ordination and organisation of the external moderation process will be the responsibility of the ESCo.
- 2.7 The wider Essential skills of Improving Own Learning, Problem Solving and Working with Others will be encouraged across all subjects.
- 2.8 Regular staff development activities will occur throughout the academic year to support staff in delivering Essential skills programmes.
- 2.9 The quality of Essential Skills delivery will be reported as part of the school self assessment review.
- 2.10 Identified students with Essential Skills below level 1 will receive 'top-up' sessions during Year 7 (and in exceptional circumstances Year 8).
- 2.11 Further support will be given through the *Successmaker* programme offered by the Additional Needs department. The Additional Needs Learning Co-ordinator (ALNCo) will also provide data on specific measures of attainment.
- 2.12 All information to allow all staff to identify the specific educational needs of Essential Skills students working below level 1 will be made available by the ESCo and ALNCo through Individual Education Plans as required by the Basic Skills Quality Standard for Secondary Schools.