

## ACADEMIC PROGRESSION THROUGH THE SCHOOL (303b)

### Introduction

Sutton High is a through-school, and it is our aim that every pupil who joins our School will remain with us until the end of Year 13, automatically transitioning between years, key stages, and sections of the School. This document outlines the support we offer to ensure that, to the best of our ability, we meet this aim. It also explains the circumstances and processes where the Head or Head of Prep may not allow such automatic transition into the next year group or key stage, when in the opinion of the Head or Head of Prep, it will not be in the child's best interests to do so.

Sutton High is an ambitious, supportive and inclusive educational community. We value integrity, clarity and transparency in all aspects of School life, including in our process for admissions of pupils to the School and the transition of pupils from one Key Stage (or year) to another, and from Prep School to Senior School and Senior School to the Sixth Form.

We are **ambitious** in adapting a pupil's academic targets to ensure they are always stretched to achieve their individual best.

We are **supportive** in that our first response to pupil difficulty or individual underperformance will always be meaningful intervention in partnership with children, families and staff to provide all appropriate support to help the pupil to succeed.

We are **inclusive** in that we value our community's diversity and work to ensure that all children admitted to the School reach their personal educational goals. We always comply with our obligations under the Equality Act. In the interest of integrity, clarity and transparency, we will engage openly with families and children when there is evidence that any child may no longer be able to thrive within the Sutton High community.

Pupils are admitted to the School on the basis that they will be able to enjoy our educational opportunities and meet our academic expectations. For information on the School's admissions process, please see the Admissions Policy, available on the School's website. All pupils are encouraged to discover and develop their knowledge, skills and interests on a journey culminating a wealth of opportunity and choice for their future path by the time they reach Year 13.

It is the aim of the School to ensure that all pupils meet the minimum academic thresholds to be sure of transition to the next phase of the School. By tracking and monitoring progress, offering timely academic intervention and maintaining an open dialogue with pupils and parents, we can be confident that all pupils will be able to comfortably access the ambitious, broad and fast-paced Sutton High School curriculum at all stages of their education.

At the various stages of academic transition, we will communicate directly with pupils and parents about their transition through:

- Guidance Meetings
- Parents Evenings and (senior school) Academic Progress Meetings
- Reports and data
- Cohort Parent Information Meetings/Curriculum Meetings and Assemblies
- Individual meetings with parents where necessary

Title	Academic Transition Policy (303b)			Page	Page 1 of 6
Last reviewed	April 2026	Next Review	September 2026	Author/Lead	DH: Academic

- Options Evening (Y9) and Sixth Form Open Evening (Y11)

## **Academic Thresholds**

### **Across the Prep School (Reception through Year 6)**

The School's attainment thresholds for younger pupils are set with the pupils' futures in Senior School and beyond in mind. Sutton High engages in robust baseline and ongoing assessment throughout all Prep year groups. In this way, teachers and senior leaders can be confident that each child's academic and developmental progress is effectively tracked and monitored as they progress through the Prep School. As part of our ongoing monitoring process, this data is regularly reviewed and appropriate academic challenge and supportive interventions are put in place for individual pupils to ensure that they are not only making the progress we would expect them to make, but that they are empowered and encouraged to reach their personal potential.

We understand that all children grow, develop, and mature at different rates, and that is why the baseline and ongoing assessments we use in the Prep School are age-standardised and provide data which can be compared against a national or international cohort of tens of thousands of children in order to allow us to understand a child's attainment both in the context of our school, but also in a much wider context. Teachers work closely with children and their parents to ensure support is put in place where the evidence shows that a pupil may not be making adequate progress, and this support is monitored and adapted to ensure that it is effective. In most cases, pupils can benefit from this support and will soon find themselves back on the expected trajectory. It is not uncommon for children to require additional intervention and support at various times throughout their education.

If it becomes clear over time that despite intervention and support, an individual pupil is unable to meet the demands of the Sutton High School curriculum and is not thriving at the School, the Head of Prep may not allow automatic transition into the next stage (year or key stage) of the pupil's education. In these rare instances, the Head of Prep and the pupil's teachers will have had several conversations with the family to help them understand the reason for the decision and to help them identify a more suitable academic environment for their child where she will be able to develop and flourish. In reaching these decisions, we place the emotional wellbeing of the child as our top priority, knowing that children who are struggling to keep up academically, or who feel that they are consistently behind their cohort, will begin to suffer in terms of self-esteem, social interaction and behaviour.

### **Year 6 to Year 7**

In keeping with our through-school ethos, nearly all girls in Year 6 at Sutton High Prep School are granted automatic admission into Year 7 at the Senior School. It is our belief that the education provided by the Prep School is of such a high standard that all pupils who are making good progress throughout Years 4, 5 and 6 will be more than capable of accessing the Senior School curriculum and thriving in our ambitious and academically selective Senior School environment. Many families choose not to register for admissions examinations at any other schools, safe in the knowledge that their child has already secured entrance into our competitive Year 7 cohort. Nonetheless, a Prep School education prepares pupils for any future pathway. Should they opt to change to another school, our curriculum develops pupils who are capable of accessing any entrance test without formal practice and preparation. It is the parents' responsibility to source revision materials for specific entrance tests. Sutton High

Title	Academic Transition Policy (303b)			Page	Page 2 of 6
Last reviewed	April 2026	Next Review	September 2026	Author/Lead	DH: Academic

does not provide revision materials or individual or group tutoring for admission to other schools.

By removing the need for preparation for entrance examinations, and as a school that does not ask our pupils to undertake Year 6 SATS testing, we are allowing more curriculum time in Year 6 to further explore academic pursuits, and time to undertake exciting Year 6 milestones, such as the Year 6 Residential visit and Year 6 Production.

All Year 6 pupils take the Sutton High School entrance examination in the Autumn Term. This is to allow us to gain further progress data, so that they can be placed into streaming or setted groups in the senior school, with the same academic data as our external applicants. This also serves the purpose of allowing all Year 6 pupils to be tested for an Academic Scholarship Award (or Bursary award, where appropriate). In addition, current Year 6 pupils may apply for a performance scholarship (Dance, Drama, Music, Art, Sport).

There may be some pupils for whom the scope and pace of the Senior School curriculum and our high academic expectations is likely to create concern. This will never be surprise for parents, and will have been discussed with parents following standardised testing and tracking throughout years 4, 5 and 6. When assessing whether the Senior School is the right environment for any pupil, we focus on her emotional wellbeing, with the understanding that all girls should feel able to confidently cope and to flourish at school.

Where we have concerns that the Senior School may not be the best option for a pupil, the Head and Head of Prep will meet with parents to outline our two-year offer process and identify what will be in place (as appropriate) to support their child if they are not on-track.

We will not prevent any pupil from transition to senior school, if, after due consideration by parents, our senior school is the preferred path for the pupil. However, in the interests of ensuring every pupil's academic success and wellbeing, our two-year offer works by:

- Allowing the pupil entry to Year 7, usually with a reduced curriculum to allow for additional support
- Across the year, every effort will be made to enable her to successfully access the senior school and thrive in our senior environment
- A review of their progress at the end of Year 7 (and during this first year in seniors, where necessary), to look at their behaviour, emotional wellbeing and ability to manage the academic demands of the senior school
- Following this review, the place will either be confirmed or we will give notice that the pupil should seek an alternative school for Year 9 onwards – Year 9 is a typical transition point in several schools and this allows a full academic year for suitable alternative arrangements to be made.

### **Across Key Stage 3 (Years 7 through 9)**

Throughout the first three years of their senior school education, KS3 students will study a wide range of subjects and have regular opportunities for their work to be assessed with supportive and stretching feedback provided.

It is expected that all pupils at Sutton High School should be at least meeting the expected standard for the School. Where it becomes clear that a pupil is falling below this standard,

Title	Academic Transition Policy (303b)			Page	Page 3 of 6
Last reviewed	April 2026	Next Review	September 2026	Author/Lead	DH: Academic

subject-specific or wider academic intervention will be put in place to support them and help them to make adequate progress. Meetings will be held with parents and our Academic Team to identify clear targets and support. The aim of the School is to ensure families are made aware of our concerns as early as possible, to enable them to seek alternative arrangements for their child, should the standards of the senior school be too demanding.

Pupils who are regularly exceeding academic expectations will have their personal targets raised at the end of the academic year, to ensure academic challenge. They may also be invited to participate in super-curricular activities to enable them to develop their academic potential further.

## **Year 10 to 11**

During their GCSEs, students will be working towards completing 8 or 9 subjects that they have chosen to match their strengths and passions at the end of the two-year courses.

Pupils have individual targets for each GCSE subject and whilst target grades are never lowered, target grades could be raised at the end of year 10 for anyone regularly exceeding their targets.

Where a pupil is consistently not meeting the expected standard in one or more of their courses, the School may alter the GCSE profile for that pupil (e.g., remove them from one or more of their courses, in some cases to allow them additional study periods during which they could focus more extensively on raising their attainment in their remaining courses). The minimum expectation is that a pupil will be attaining a grade 4 pass by the end of Year 10, across all subjects studied.

Typical interventions for those who continue to not meet expectations include meetings with the Academic Leadership Team to develop an Academic Action Plan. These most often arise following the end of year examinations in June of Year 10 to provide pupils with the summer to improve. According to the Parental Contract, the School may reduce the GCSE profile for a pupil at any point during Years 10 and 11 if in the opinion of the Head it is in the pupil's best interests to do so.

A pupil's GCSE profile will not be reduced below 8 subjects (unless in specific circumstances, usually related to health or attendance, or where a significant number of subjects are below expected levels). We know that GCSE grades are viewed for quality rather than quantity, by both universities and employers. For UCAS applications, a pupil's best 8 GCSE subjects are considered.

Where a subject has an available Foundation Tier entry (Sciences, Maths and Modern Foreign Languages), a pupil may be moved to this tier at the discretion of the Head and Deputy Head Academic, where this is the pupil's best chance to reach a 'good pass' (grade 5).

For those pupils achieving at a suitably high level, the school offers Further Maths. In addition, students can take GCSEs in languages where they have native proficiency.

## **Year 11 into the Sixth Form**

Title	Academic Transition Policy (303b)			Page	Page 4 of 6
Last reviewed	April 2026	Next Review	September 2026	Author/Lead	DH: Academic

External entry into the Sutton High Sixth Form is dependent upon achieving the required GCSE grades for the subjects the pupil wishes to study at A level. These can be found in the most current Sixth Form Prospectus, available on the School's website. Pupils are also required to achieve a minimum of a Grade 5 in both GCSE Maths and GCSE English Language or Literature.

Provided Year 11 pupils have achieved GCSE results that allow for a meaningful programme of A Level Study, that is able to be timetabled, they will enjoy automatic transition into Year 12. Pupils from our Year 11 cohort can also apply for competitive scholarships in a range of performance areas and/or academic subjects.

Where progress in Year 11 suggests that a pupil may not meet the threshold for A Level study in the Sixth Form, supportive intervention will be made alongside clear dialogue with the pupil and their family.

For some pupils, especially those where GCSE results are all below a grade 6, an academic pathway of two A Levels and an Elective (or two Electives) may be the most suitable route towards higher education. For others, where GCSE results are consistently high, an additional A Level may be studied to enable stretch and academic challenge.

The life of the Sixth Form is also academically rich outside of the classroom. For those pupils aspiring to study a subject at Higher Education, there are numerous additional extra-curricular opportunities including trips, clubs, and additional support for Oxbridge and other competitive university applications.

All pupils joining the Sixth Form are required to engage fully in the curriculum (A Levels and Elective, Enrichment and Sport). This means committing to all four pillars of the Sixth Form curriculum. Our aim is always to prepare pupils for the next stage in their academic journey, ensuring that a suitable range of universities (and apprenticeships) will be available to them upon completion of Sixth Form study. A comprehensive programme of careers and futures activities takes place throughout the two years of Sixth Form study, empowering every pupil to reach her aspirational future goals.

## **Year 12 to 13**

A Levels are highly demanding. Course content and pace increase and become more challenging in Year 13 and pupils must work hard to make this academic leap. The vast majority of our pupils make good progress and attain excellent results across the A Level course.

Where progress earlier in Year 12 suggests that a pupil is under-performing, supportive intervention will be made alongside clear dialogue with the pupil and their family. It is always our intention that this intervention and openness will help a pupil to a position where they continue towards success in Year 13.

Following the Year 12 examinations, each pupil's attainment and progress is reviewed by the Academic Leadership Team. Any pupil attaining below a C grade in any of their subjects will meet with the Academic Leadership Team and be required to undertake an Academic Action Plan and a subject resit examination.

Title	Academic Transition Policy (303b)			Page	Page 5 of 6
Last reviewed	April 2026	Next Review	September 2026	Author/Lead	DH: Academic

Where a student gets one grade at D or lower (with two good passes), they will need to engage in an Academic Action Plan to ensure improvement across Year 13. If more than one grade is at a D or lower, further outcomes will be considered at the end of Year 12, including dropping one subject if this is in the pupil's best interests.

The decision for a pupil to reduce to two A Levels would only be taken where there is significant academic underperformance across the subjects studied, poor attendance, or medical or educational needs that impact on a pupil's ability to access the curriculum. When this decision is taken, additional guidance is put in place to ensure that a pupil has a clear onwards trajectory to higher education.

Pupils who are attaining consistently high grades at the end of Year 12 are further encouraged to take on super-curricular extension tasks, such as academic competitions, to prepare them for entry to top universities and competitive apprenticeships.

### **Intervention**

Intervention in the Prep School is communicated to parents in younger years. In the Senior School, intervention will be communicated to pupils in the first instance, and to parents where there is significant concern.

Intervention takes a range of forms and will be tailored to the individual. This includes, where relevant, work with the ALN Team for pupils with additional learning needs. Intervention for the most able may include invitations to additional masterclasses, stretch lessons or super-curricular activities.

Throughout Years 10-13, where a pupil has a reduced curriculum (8 GCSEs or 2 A Levels), they will receive academic mentoring, and in Year 10 and 11, those with 8 GCSE subjects will spend their 'free' lessons with the Academic Mentoring Team, working with a particular focus on ensuring that their core subjects (Maths, English and Science) are at a good pass grade.

In the Sixth Form, if a pupil is undertaking an Academic Action Plan, specific tasks will be set to ensure that they maintain effort and academic focus throughout the summer between Year 12 and 13 and during Year 13.

Intervention is always planned with the aim of ensuring that pupils reach their full academic potential and can thrive and flourish across all stages of Sutton High. Intervention tasks should be seen as compulsory, in that, where intervention has been put in place, this will always be with the child's best interests at the fore – refusal to engage with intervention will lead to meetings with the Head of Prep/Head.

Title	Academic Transition Policy (303b)			Page	Page 6 of 6
Last reviewed	April 2026	Next Review	September 2026	Author/Lead	DH: Academic