

# GOSFORTH JUNIOR HIGH ACADEMY CURRICULUM POLICY

## Rationale – the aims of our curriculum:

Provide children with an introduction to the essential knowledge they need, empowering them to be educated and responsible citizens:

- Enable children to retain and apply this essential knowledge
- Build upon prior knowledge to maximise the progress made by all children
- Inspire children to become life-long learners
- Create a culture of high aspiration through challenging content and therefore pride in achievement
- Promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children, including fundamental
- British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith
- Provide opportunities for developing self-confidence, self-awareness, independence, creativity, respect and resilience in children
- Promote knowledge and understanding of how children can keep themselves safe and healthy
- Develop children's numeracy, literacy and oracy, including the sustained expansion of their vocabulary

## Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects the requirements for academies to provide a broad and balanced curriculum as per the Academies Act 2010, and the National Curriculum programmes of study which the school has chosen to follow.

It also reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014 and Equality Act 2010, and refers to curriculum-related expectations of governing boards set out in the Department for Education's Governance Handbook.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Governance

The governance of the school will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold senior leaders to account for its implementation. The governing body will also ensure that:

- A robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets
- The school is complying with its funding agreement and teaching a "broad and balanced curriculum" which includes English, maths, and science, and enough teaching time is provided for pupils to cover the requirements of the funding agreement
- Proper provision is made for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with special educational needs (SEN)
- The school implements the relevant statutory assessment arrangements
- It participates actively in decision-making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum

- Pupils, from Year 7 onwards, are provided with independent, impartial careers guidance and that this is appropriately resourced

## Senior leaders

Senior leaders are responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to, and that:

- All required elements of the curriculum, and those subjects which the school chooses to offer, have aims and objectives which reflect the aims of the school
- The amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the governing body
- They manage requests to withdraw children from curriculum subjects, where appropriate
- The school's procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements
- The governing body is fully involved in decision-making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum
- The Trustees are advised on whole-school targets in order to make informed decisions
- Proper provision is in place for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with SEN

## Middle leaders

Leaders of Teaching and Learning are responsible for the implementation of this policy in their departments and ensuring that:

- Effective long-term planning is undertaken and the curriculum information on the website is up to date
- Effective medium term planning is undertaken in the form of schemes of work which support the aims of our curriculum and are in line with whole-school expectations
- Staff in their departments are aware of and follow those schemes of work

## Curriculum Implementation

The curriculum at Gosforth Junior High Academy is broad, balanced, enriching and challenging, and is based on the National Curriculum programmes of study. It provides opportunities for children to achieve their potential and to fulfil their aspirations by encouraging high expectations and excellent standards of academic achievement and pupil progress. Our intake is very diverse in terms of social, cultural and ethnic background, and ability range. To meet the very differing needs of our students, we offer a range of enrichment programmes for groups of students (such as Pupil Premium, Gifted and Talented and those supported through our specialist Student Support Base).

Our Personal Development, at Key Stage 2, provides an enrichment programme to broaden horizons and, at Key Stage 3, enhances education in STEM, careers and enterprise. We ensure access to an extensive range of extra-curricular activities to support our curriculum, and we provide an annual Enterprise and Activities Week, for all pupils, to broaden their experiences. Intervention sessions complement the curriculum to ensure that all children are supported in achieving their full potential.

Our curriculum positively promotes the personal development, behaviour and well-being of pupils and provides the support needed for children to advance to the next stage of their education and helps equip them for the demands of life in the 21st Century.

## Curriculum Structure

In all key stages at Gosforth Junior High Academy, there are 30 periods per week, each lasting 50 minutes with an additional 20 minutes at the start of each day for tutorial time, intervention and assemblies. All students receive the same curriculum entitlement unless a more personalised approach to the curriculum is more beneficial to the individual by enhancing their personal and social development (such approaches are organised only in exceptional circumstances and with the agreement of parents/carers).

Students are set in English and maths, which allows for appropriate challenge and support in these core subject areas. Whenever possible, we encourage literacy and numeracy links to be made across other areas of the curriculum, through the use of Accelerated Reader, Rapid Readers, Timetables Rockstars and regular library sessions to encourage a love of reading across the school.

Curriculum leaders work closely with feeder schools to ensure that learning is seamless and sequenced, building on strengths whilst addressing gaps in knowledge. We also consider our local context in curriculum planning. These will be a core focus at the heart of our curriculum design. Any gaps in knowledge are identified through the use of assessments and question level analysis, which is then used to develop the curriculum and, therefore, inform the planning of lessons and where necessary, interventions.

Personal development is an important part of the curriculum at Gosforth Junior High. We recognise the importance of online safety and the education of this subject in keeping students safe. Online safety is delivered as both a discrete and stand-alone topic across many curriculum subjects and is further supported through the delivery of assemblies and talks by specialists in this area.

The teaching of British Values is embedded throughout the curriculum and further supported through assemblies, school trips, visits and specialist workshops. This reflects the diverse make up of our school and supports students to understand their role in society and develop an appreciation of diversity and multi culturalism within Britain. Careers education is taught as part of the Key Stage 3 PSHE curriculum and students benefit from a Careers Day.

Our extra-curricular programme changes on a half-termly basis and students are offered a range of opportunities (such as sports, performance arts and technologies), delivered by both GJHA staff and external agencies. These sessions are also opportunities for students to socialise across the year groups/key stages.

RSE is taught across both Key Stages and incorporates the new guidance on RSE. We want our pupils to have the knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy. We also invite other health-care professionals into school and work closely with these bodies to ensure our RSE provision is tailored to our school context.

Assemblies are planned to be both informative and thought provoking so that students can reflect on issues that are both personal to them and their peers. Topical issues, celebrations and rewards are also an integral part of the assembly programme. KS2 Tutor groups are given the opportunity to plan and deliver an assembly which allows them to work collaboratively with their peers and helps to develop key skills such as public speaking. To support with transition into Key Stage 2, parents are invited into assemblies.

## Key Stage 2 Curriculum

We aim to give our children the best possible start to their upper KS2 education, building on the skills and knowledge they acquire in first schools whilst preparing them for the next stage in their education. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum, which provides opportunities for children to learn both in and outside of the classroom using a variety of teaching styles and resources, developing independence, interest and resilience throughout the key stage. By laying the foundations of a love of learning and

inquisitive nature, we are preparing our pupils to be successful both in the classroom and beyond. During the transition period, we work closely with our feeder school colleagues to develop our pupils' strengths and continue to build on these from Year 5 onwards.

All students follow the appropriate National Curriculum programmes of study. The subjects studied are English, Mathematics, Science, PHSE, History, Geography, Music, Spanish, Art, Technology, PE, ICT, Drama and RE. Teaching is undertaken by a specialist team of Key Stage 2 teachers following the primary model of most subjects being taught by the class teacher. Key Stage 2 provision includes our "Confidence Curriculum": one afternoon per fortnight when students follow an enrichment programme, which aims to broaden horizons and instil greater confidence, whilst developing their social, emotional and moral awareness. Our work with the Newcastle United Foundation further embeds these skills.

The children are taught by their class teacher on a daily basis; this allows for smooth transition from feeder schools and builds a strong teacher-pupil relationship. We liaise regularly with our main feeder schools so that we have a sound knowledge of the children joining us.

Homework is set regularly to revise, challenge and consolidate the skills and knowledge taught in the classroom. Reading outside of school is encouraged and students are rewarded for doing so.

## Key Stage 3 Curriculum

All students follow the appropriate National Curriculum programmes of study in Years 7 and 8. The subjects studied are English, Mathematics, Science, PHSE, Personal Development, History, Geography, Music, French, Art, Technology, PE, Computing, and RE. Teaching is undertaken by a specialist team of Key Stage 3 teachers, with students having a specialist teacher for each subject.

There is a timetabled enrichment programme to enhance students' education in areas such as STEM, careers, and enterprise.

We aim to give our pupils the best possible start to their secondary education, and this is as the very heart of the delivery of our curriculum at Key Stage 3. During the transition period to Key Stage 3, we work closely with our Key Stage 2 colleagues to identify our pupils' strengths and continue to build upon these from Year 7 onwards so that transition is seamless and no learning time is lost. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum at Key Stage 3 that provides opportunities for children to learn both inside and outside of the classroom, using a variety of teaching styles, resources and techniques. This not only helps children prepare for examinations in Key Stage 4, but also fosters a culture of independence, curiosity and resilience to support them throughout their future educational and working life.

## Curriculum planning

Long-term curriculum plans are in place for every subject in the form of curriculum outlines. These are published on our website and show:

- The curriculum content in each half term across each year of study
- The skills/knowledge that are developed through the study of the subject

**Medium-term curriculum plans** are in the form of schemes of work for each subject. There is an agreed approach across all departments which follows this guidance:

- A key test as to whether a scheme of work is fit for purpose is: would it clearly show a new/inexperienced/ non-specialist member of staff how to teach the course effectively?

- Schemes of work should be living documents, subject to regular discussion and review, which promote consistency and creativity in the teaching within a department.
- Departments' units of work do not need to adopt a specific design or use any particular template; instead, departments are free to set out their plans in the way they feel most appropriate.
- To ensure that curriculum planning is consistently effective across the school, there are key features that are found in unit plans.

## Feature Notes

Feature	Notes
Content	Set out details of what is to be taught in a sequenced way that builds upon knowledge in a progressive way. In most cases this will be based on content already set out in the National Curriculum programme of study. For example, sub-topics, themes or key concepts.
Duration/timings	Give guidance on the number of lessons/weeks that need to be spent teaching the different elements of the unit of work.
Assessment	Ensure this is in line with department assessment policy, and detail which tasks must be done as common assessments (e.g. end of unit tests, past paper questions).
Suggested teaching approaches	Enable and encourage the sharing of good practice by listing possible learning activities to be used for the delivery of the unit that have been proven to be successful, effective or motivating.
Key vocabulary	In the teaching of each unit of work, students' vocabulary should be extended, both in understanding and active use - detail the key vocabulary to be taught to and used by students.
Planned knowledge retrieval	Review previously taught knowledge / key concepts.
Resources	Provide a list of resources recommended for the teaching of the unit, and any others that may be useful or available for teachers to use
Reading	Planned reading opportunities linked to what is being taught.

## Inclusion

Teachers set high expectations for all pupils. They use appropriate assessment to set ambitious targets and plan challenging work for all groups, including:

- More able pupils
- Pupils with low prior attainment
- Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Pupils with SEN
- Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)

Teachers plan lessons so that pupils with SEN and/or disabilities can study every National Curriculum subject, wherever possible, and ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving. Teachers will also take account of the needs of pupils whose first language is not English. Lessons will be planned so that teaching opportunities help pupils to develop their English, and to support pupils to take part in all subjects.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 18 January 2024