

GOSFORTH JUNIOR HIGH ACADEMY CURRICULUM POLICY

Rationale – the aims of our curriculum:

Provide children with the essential knowledge they need, empowering them to create their future and be 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 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 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
- 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 to make informed decisions
- Proper provision is in place for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with SEN and vulnerable learners.
- Curriculum and assessments are reviewed termly with middle leaders.

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 map on the website is up to date
- Effective medium-term planning is undertaken in the form of learning journeys 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 learning journeys.
- Robust assessments are used to enable students to make clear progress.

Curriculum Structure

At Gosforth Junior High Academy, all key stages follow a weekly timetable of 30 periods, each lasting 50 minutes, alongside 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 is needed to support an individual's personal and social development; such adaptations occur only in exceptional circumstances and always in partnership with parents and carers.

In Key Stage 3, we use broader groupings designed to ensure that all children are both supported and appropriately challenged within a wider-ability structure. In Key Stage 2, students are placed in sets, but only to ensure that the right level of support can be provided—every child still accesses the same learning journeys, curriculum content and high-quality teaching. Literacy and numeracy remain a strong whole-school focus, supported using Accelerated Reader, Times Tables Rockstars, and weekly library lessons. In addition to their timetabled library session, students can also access the library at break and lunchtime to foster a love of reading.

Curriculum leaders have worked collaboratively with our local first schools, middle schools and high schools to design gateway documents that clearly outline the skills and knowledge students are developing before they join us, and what they leave with when moving on. This ensures a seamless,

sequenced learning journey across all phases of education. We work closely with feeder schools and organise a range of taster days across multiple subjects for students joining us in Year 5, supporting a smooth and enthusiastic transition. Gaps in knowledge are identified through careful assessment and question-level analysis, enabling us to plan bespoke interventions to support individual needs; these intervention programmes begin in Year 5 and can continue through to Year 8 to ensure sustained progress.

In PSHE lessons, 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 both the Key Stage 2 and 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. 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. 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.

Curriculum planning

Long-term learning journeys 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.
- To ensure that curriculum planning is consistently effective across the school, there are key features, such as key vocabulary, that are found in unit plans.

Curriculum Implementation

The curriculum at Gosforth Junior High Academy is broad, balanced, enriching and appropriately challenging. It is aligned with the National Curriculum programmes of study and is designed to inspire a love of learning while ensuring all pupils can achieve highly and make strong progress.

Our intake is diverse in terms of social, cultural and ethnic background, as well as ability range. To meet the varied needs of our students, we provide a wide range of targeted and personalised support. This includes bespoke intervention groups, access to our Student Support Base, and enrichment opportunities

designed to remove barriers to learning and promote success for all learners, including our most vulnerable pupils.

We offer an extensive programme of extracurricular activities that supports and enhances the taught curriculum, enabling pupils to develop new skills, broaden their interests and strengthen their personal development. Our annual Enterprise and Activities Week provides all pupils with opportunities to engage in new experiences, develop creativity, build resilience, and deepen their understanding of the wider world.

Our curriculum is intentionally designed to promote pupils' personal development, positive behaviour and well-being. It equips pupils with the knowledge, skills and attributes needed for success both now and as they progress to the next stage of their education. Through high expectations, high-quality teaching and a commitment to inclusion, we ensure every pupil is supported and challenged to fulfil their potential.

Key Stage 2 Curriculum

We aim to give all pupils the best possible start to their upper Key Stage 2 education by building on the knowledge and skills they bring from their first schools, while preparing them effectively for the next stage of their learning journey. Our broad and balanced curriculum provides opportunities for children to learn both within and beyond the classroom, using quality first teaching, inclusive approaches and high-quality resources. Across the key stage, we promote independence, curiosity and resilience, helping pupils develop a secure foundation for future success.

We work closely with our feeder schools throughout the transition process to ensure we understand each child's strengths and starting points. This enables us to offer a smooth, well-supported transition into Year 5 and beyond.

In Year 5, we place a strong emphasis on the essential foundational skills that underpin learning across the curriculum. This includes a clear focus on reading, handwriting, oracy and arithmetic fluency. By strengthening these core areas early, pupils are better equipped to access the full curriculum with confidence and make sustained progress.

All students follow the relevant National Curriculum programmes of study. Subjects taught include English, Mathematics, Science, PSHE, History, Geography, Music, Spanish, Art, Technology, PE, ICT, Drama and RE. Teaching is delivered by our specialist team of Key Stage 2 teachers, following a primary-style model in which the class teacher leads most subjects. This approach supports strong teacher-pupil relationships and provides continuity, stability and pastoral support throughout the key stage.

The class teacher works with pupils daily, enabling responsive teaching and a thorough understanding of each child's academic and personal development. Regular communication with feeder schools ensures that we begin each year with a detailed picture of our learners' needs and strengths.

Homework is set weekly to revise, consolidate and extend the knowledge and skills taught in lessons. Reading outside of school is strongly encouraged, and pupils are recognised and rewarded for their efforts. Through consistent expectations and a supportive learning environment, we foster a love of learning that extends beyond the classroom.

Key Stage 3 Curriculum

All students follow the appropriate National Curriculum programmes of study in Years 7 and 8. Subjects studied include English, Mathematics, Science, PSHE, Personal Development, History, Geography, Music, French, Art, Technology, PE, Computing and RE. Each subject is taught by a specialist teacher, ensuring high-quality teaching and strong subject knowledge across the curriculum.

We are committed to ensuring a seamless transition between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3. Teachers dedicate time to sharing detailed knowledge of pupils' strengths, needs and prior learning so that students experience continuity, stability and a smooth academic progression into Year 7. This collaborative approach means no learning time is lost, and pupils can build confidently on the strong foundations established in upper Key Stage 2.

Our broad and balanced Key Stage 3 curriculum provides a rich variety of learning experiences both inside and outside the classroom. Quality first teaching, high-quality resources and engaging curriculum

design ensure pupils develop independence, curiosity and resilience—skills they will rely on throughout their education and future working lives.

We offer bespoke curriculum-led sessions coordinated by subject leaders. These sessions deepen learning, provide opportunities for challenges, and offer experiences that strengthen pupils' cultural capital and subject understanding.

To further support progress, we run targeted intervention sessions throughout Key Stage 3 with a particular focus on developing reading fluency, comprehension and arithmetic skills. These interventions ensure that all pupils can access the full curriculum and make strong progress.

Assessment at Key Stage 3 is carried out using our 5-point assessment system, which aligns with approaches used by our partner senior schools. This supports consistency, helps pupils understand their progress journey and prepares them effectively for the transition to Key Stage 4.

Inclusion

Teachers have high expectations for every pupil. They use a range of assessment information to set ambitious, meaningful targets and plan suitably challenging learning for all groups of learners, including:

- More able pupils
- Pupils with low prior attainment
- Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Pupils with special educational needs (SEN)
- Pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL)

Lessons are carefully planned so that pupils with SEN and/or disabilities can access the full National Curriculum wherever possible, with appropriate support and adaptations in place. Teachers work to ensure that no pupil faces unnecessary barriers to success and that each learner can make strong progress.

Teachers also take account of the needs of pupils whose first language is not English. Learning is designed to provide opportunities for pupils to develop their English language skills while enabling full

participation across all subjects. By embedding language development within every lesson, we ensure that EAL learners are supported both academically and socially.

Date approved: March 2026
Signed: Niamh Reilly
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