

Curriculum Statements 2022 - 2024

Key Stage 3



English

The English curriculum supports pupils to acquire knowledge, skills and to seek meaning within their world. The English curriculum has been designed to ensure that pupils have a rich experience of a diverse range of texts which promote equality, cohesion, political awareness, and British values; as well as being challenged and supported to write regularly.

In Key Stage 3, pupils are allocated three lessons of English per week. We access the National Curriculum to ensure pupils can experience a wide range of different texts including fiction, plays, poetry and non-fiction. Pupils are provided with opportunities to express their thoughts and ideas both creatively and accurately, not only through their writing but also through debate, drama, and formal presentations. Spirals learning is fundamental to the curriculum, so that pupils build on and retain their knowledge as the key stage progresses. Knowledge recall is an integral part of the subject as pupils will be asked to organise their ideas, apply knowledge, and problem-solve. Learning is personalised and scaffolded to suit each pupil and to support them in their journey to become independent learners.

The English programme of study will empower pupils to become increasingly confident readers, writers and communicators whilst developing their resilience and knowledge so they can positively influence the wider world. Each lesson within a KS3 unit of work is focused on developing the essential core skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening; enabling each pupil to gain greater cultural understanding and to become confident independent learners.

Maths

The Maths curriculum at the Academy is in line with the National Curriculum. The course will provide a strong foundation for further academic and vocational study and future employment. Pupils will be signposted to various careers where the use of mathematics is an essential skill. Due to the nature of the provision, there has to be an element of flexibility in terms of how the curriculum is delivered.

The focus, particularly at Key Stage 3, is to ensure pupils have the essential number skills to enable them to access the curriculum; some pupils may have significant gaps in their knowledge having missed weeks, months or even years of education. The purpose of the programme of study is to ensure that pupils do not fear mathematics, but instead understand its value and importance in their lives moving forwards. This programme of study will provide real life examples of how mathematics affects pupils' lives on daily basis. It will also provide real life context in terms of employment and will be used to inspire and motivate pupils to start thinking about their future careers and starting to consider the footpath towards it. Pupils will learn to express themselves and feel confident in taking part in class discussions without fear of failure.

Science

The main aim of the Science programme of study is to help pupils recognise the importance of science in the world. The programme is engaging, practical and will allow the pupils to experience science using real and accessible examples. The learning is put into a real-world context, developed to raise the cultural capital of our pupils using local, as well as world examples. This programme will teach pupils to challenge their own ideas about science and to reflect on learning. The programme seeks to raise the profile of science for the pupils and to help pupils understand the value of science in their lives and the lives of others.

Flexibility is key to the implementation of the Science programme. Pupils are accepted by the provision throughout the year with significant gaps in their knowledge, often having missed years of education. The programme can be individualised with every lesson having achievable objectives, varying in complexity to accommodate all learners. This programme will help facilitate the transition into mainstream education and has been tailor-made to consider the backgrounds of pupils, previous attitudes towards science and the varying stages of scientific knowledge.

Computing

The Computing curriculum at the Academy has been designed to inspire pupils to develop an understanding of the technological world around them. Our aim is to ensure that pupils are using technology safely by approaching internet safety scenarios and how to stay safe online. The Computing curriculum offers pupils a broad and balanced approach to ICT and computing.

To engage pupils in lessons, the curriculum offers an interactive approach to the subject by using different tools such as Minecraft Education, Hour of Code and Scratch, when exploring coding and programming, the use of digital media tools such as photography and video editing. Pupils will also learn basic skills with Microsoft Office. The combination of media and computing will help with pupils' confidence when using computers and will also help them to develop practical skills like, critical thinking, teamwork, and decision making.

A high-quality computing education equips our pupils to use computational thinking and creativity to understand and change the world. Computing has deep links with mathematics, science, design, and technology, and provides insights into both natural and artificial systems. Computing also ensures that pupils become digitally literate and express themselves and develop their ideas through, information and communication technology which is at a level suitable for the future workplace and allows them to become active participants in a digital world.

Creative Art

The Creative Art curriculum is a three-year programme of study that is designed to provide pupils with a broad, balanced, and bespoke creative arts curriculum enabling learners to develop and learn different areas of creative arts including art, drama, and music.

Through the Creative Arts curriculum, we intend to engage, or in some cases re-engage, pupils to create a positive 'can-do' approach to creative arts. In doing so, the aim is to dispel any preconceptions or anxieties that pupils may have from their time in mainstream education. Lessons are structured and support a range of mixed abilities and the aim is to develop confidence in the subject whilst allowing pupils a safe space to practice, analyse and develop their work through a 70:30 split of practical and theory.

These opportunities are provided through the consolidated section of the lesson where pupils review their own work and evaluate their success towards the learning intention. Pupils develop a respect for the different arts through research projects around key figures, movements, and concepts as well as through practising a range of styles and techniques. By the end of Key Stage 3, we aim for each pupil to explore the creation of creative pieces of work learning and improving methods of drawing, painting, sculpture, and other art.

Culture and Belief

The Culture and Belief curriculum is designed with the objective of enhancing pupils' knowledge and comprehension of belief systems, cultures, and global issues. Within this program of study, we focus on six primary areas: Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, and Non-Religious beliefs. Each term, one of these religions becomes the central focus, allowing our pupils to delve into the key principles and significant events that underpin each belief system. Additionally, pupils explore the cultural traditions associated with these belief systems. This curriculum serves to emphasise the distinctions between specific religious beliefs and how culture has evolved and adapted throughout history.

Through this curriculum, each pupil will gain a deeper understanding of diverse religions, their perspectives, and beliefs. They will develop critical life skills such as the ability to practice tolerance towards others.

Design and Technology

The Design and Technology curriculum at the Academy is delivered through a variety of creative and practical activities. Pupils will be taught the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to engage in the interactive process of designing and making. They will work in a range of domestic, local, and industrial contexts while helping the school build wider local relationships.

The programme of study will build pupils' confidence while helping them recognise their personal strengths and help them use these effectively in tasks not only in design and technology but in other education settings. The Design and Technology programme aims to build other skills such as being able to work independently and as part of a group, while also respecting others and their own work.

The pupils will work through a series of practical models with the degree of difficulty and skills required becoming gradually harder, this will push the pupil's hand to eye coordination and help build up their resilience and confidence. The theory lessons will embed any prior knowledge gained and assist with improving pupil's overall outcomes.

Food Technology

The Food Technology curriculum is a three-year programme of study, allowing pupils to learn a range of subject specific knowledge and skills which will be vital for their future. The curriculum prepares pupils for KS4 studies and further education. The curriculum also prepares pupils for independent living for the duration of their lives. At the Academy we strongly believe it is important for pupils to be prepared for life after education and to learn how to make cost effective and healthy meals, which is reflected through our Food Technology curriculum. We feel that the curriculum is broad and enriching, to support pupils' social and personal development.

All pupils in KS3 pupils have two timetabled Food Technology lessons per week. One lesson focuses on the theory element of the subject. The second lesson is a practical lesson, pupils are able prepare and cook food, learning and practicing new skills frequently. Knowledge recall is a vital part of this subject; pupils regularly have the chance to recall prior knowledge. Theory lessons and practical lessons link together, and pupils regularly build on the skills they are learning.

Food Technology features a curriculum with links to many other subjects, including, Maths, English, Science, PSHCE and culture & Belief. The curriculum provides pupils an opportunity to apply skills built in these subjects in context. At the start of each academic year all KS3 pupils will cover health, safety, and hygiene rules for the curriculum. Pupils will also learn about where food comes from, about what it means to have a balanced diet, different cultural practices and how to make cost effective choices about food. The curriculum also has a focus on careers within the cooking industry. This allows pupils to explore the many different careers within this subject that are possible for them to achieve.

Geography

At the start of programme of study, pupils will examine the reasons it is important to study Geography. They will gain an understanding of what Geography is and why we study the subject. Pupils will gain a better understanding of their local area as well as the rest of the UK and our place in the world. This topic introduces some key geographical skills including grid referencing and using data, as well as providing pupils with a basic knowledge and understanding of the key topics in contemporary geography. At the start of each year, this topic is revisited to reinforce and inspire in pupils a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people that will remain with them for the rest of their lives.

During the rest of the first year, pupils focus on two fascinating and high-profile topics – climate change and ecosystems. These topics allow them to explore what we need to survive and how varied the access to these resources are around the world. This topic also allows pupils to gain a deeper understanding of how human and physical processes interact to influence our environment.

In the second year, pupils have the chance to study natural hazards, traditionally a favourite topic of many pupils. We start off by looking what we mean by a hazard and where in the world we get different types of hazards. The topic itself looks at tectonic earthquakes and tsunamis, as well as volcanoes. The pupils get a chance to investigate the cause, effects and responses to different hazards looking at specific case study examples that they may have heard about.

We then progress onto population and migration, an important topic as it provides pupils with a broader perspective on why the number of people living on this planet is growing, the Earth's capacity to support this growth. Finally, the pupils develop some of the skills learnt at the start of the year by studying one of the staple KS3 topics of maps and coordinates.

In the third year, pupils move onto the controversial topic of 'scarcity of resources'. This topic is of great interest to many of our pupils, with huge media interest in people like Greta Thunberg, many of our pupils may already have a real interest in saving our planet. We start off by looking at the UK's resource needs, before moving onto energy, both renewable and non-renewable. Pupils will look at the costs and benefits of many different ways to get the energy we need. Overall, they will consider how varied access to this is around the world and what we can do to help solve some of the world's issues. Subsequently, pupils will move onto weather patterns, developing a deeper understanding of why we get the weather that we do, by exploring air masses and atmospheric circulation models. Pupils will then move on to study a range of different weather extremes including droughts and tornadoes. Finally, pupils will move onto two contemporary topics – travel and tourism and the geography of sport. These topics will serve to further broaden the knowledge of pupils, whilst demonstrating to them the enormous range and depth of subject matter that geography involves.

History

The curriculum has been designed and planned to directly meet the needs of our pupils. The outlook that is typically taken within the Humanities curriculum is to look at subject areas internationally, nationally, and then regionally which will provide pupils with an informed 'world view' and develop essential cultural capital for our pupils to evolve into rounded British citizens. Within topics such as 'What is History?' pupils also investigate careers where history skills are used, or necessary in a field of work, demonstrating its importance as part of the national curriculum.

At the start of the first year, pupils are given an overview of what history is about, the reasons for studying the subject and the skills that are needed to be an effective historian; these aspects are revisited and developed at the start of years two and three, to reinforce and nurture the capacity to ask perceptive questions, think critically, weigh evidence, sift arguments, and develop perspective and judgement. History helps pupils to understand the complexity of people's lives, the process of change, the diversity of societies and relationships between different groups, as well as their own identity and the challenges of their time.

Also in the first year, pupils will study key aspects of British history, investigating the impact of the Suffragettes on society, Britain's colonial past and the impact of slavery, and Britain's role in World War 1. A knowledge and understanding of the history of Britain and how peoples' lives have shaped this nation will enhance knowledge and cultural capital from a local and national viewpoint.

In the second year, pupils broaden their knowledge by examining Britain's colonial past and how it built its empire, as well as looking life in Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome. Pupils then progress onto life in Nazi Germany and the impact of the Holocaust. Gaining a historical perspective by placing knowledge into different contexts and making connections between cultural, economic, military, political and social history, will help pupils to understand continuity and change, cause, and consequence.

In the third year, pupils study life in medieval England, with a focus on the Black Death, before progressing onto the Industrial Revolution and the way this started to develop Britain into a more modern society. Finally, pupils have their knowledge and understanding brought up to date by studying aspects of modern history, examining the influence that transport has had on society and the impact of terrorism.

Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE)

The Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship Education (PSHCE) curriculum at the Academy is dedicated to equipping pupils with the knowledge, skills, and attributes necessary to navigate the many opportunities, challenges, and responsibilities they will encounter during their five-year journey from Year 7 to Year 11. These lessons are carefully structured to focus on the health and well-being of our young learners, with the overarching goal of fostering and sustaining their overall well-being. By exploring personal qualities, attitudes, skills, and achievements, these sessions aim to strengthen pupils' self-confidence, self-esteem, and their ability to accept constructive feedback and exhibit resilience.

Embedded within the PSHCE curriculum is the DfE's framework for Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, which forms the foundation for many of the topics covered. This framework underscores the importance of supporting young individuals in developing healthy and nurturing relationships across various stages of life. Additionally, the curriculum places a strong emphasis on employability skills, teamwork, and leadership, providing pupils with essential tools for their future endeavours. Topics such as CV writing, career exploration in specific sectors, letter composition, interview techniques, and time management are explored, aligning with the principles of career education and the Gatsby benchmarks. It is our commitment to ensuring that every pupil and their parents have access to high-quality information regarding future educational pathways and employment opportunities.

Our PSHCE curriculum is a comprehensive program designed to nurture well-rounded individuals who are not only academically competent but also equipped with the life skills and personal attributes necessary to thrive as they transition into adulthood.

Physical Education

The purpose of Physical Education (PE) at the Academy is to provide pupils with a broad and balanced, inclusive PE curriculum which is national curriculum compatible but personalised to meet the needs of our pupil cohort. The desired impact is that the programme will build resilience and confidence to be able to apply theoretical and practical sports knowledge and skills which will be crucial in the pupil's educational development for reintegration into mainstream KS3 & KS4 PE as well as preparation for higher level BTEC Sport and related qualifications.

The way in which the PE curriculum is designed and taught considers the background of the pupils and their attitudes towards sport and PE, catering for a range of needs and abilities. The programme aims to engage, or in some cases, re-engage pupils to create a positive attitude and approach to sports and PE. The curriculum strives to build confidence and comprehensive knowledge of sport and PE for each individual pupil through careful planning and delivery of unit content in a range of sports and activities.

Within the curriculum, pupils are also provided the opportunity to partake in different educational visits to sports facilities and venues as well as opportunities to compete competitively within their cohort, and with other local provisions. The curriculum is designed to be delivered in an applied way, delivering appropriate content focussing on practical and technical skills of sports, as well as developing interpersonal and intrapersonal skills that are pivotal to being successful in their future lives and careers. One of the main holistic outcomes for KS3 PE is for pupils to build their confidence and self-esteem, so that pupils can thrive within and outside of the classroom.