



**A S H L A W N**  
SCHOOL

# **Curriculum**

# **Policy**

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## **1. Curriculum aims**

At Ashlawn we recognise that every young person journeys from ‘novice’ to ‘expert’ learner. Over time, learning is therefore a transformational experience, and this engages students in a commitment to lifelong learning. This journey is enabled through the acquisition, assimilation and application of a knowledge-rich curriculum where ‘remembering’ is an essential component to that learning process.

Our goal is for students to acquire ‘powerful’ knowledge drawing on a rich cultural capital, where literacy, reading, oracy, numeracy and careers guidance enables knowledge to be used flexibly, powerfully and procedurally. This knowledge is structured and sequenced into foundational, core, developmental and complex knowledge through traditional academic domains which provide a broad, balanced, academic curriculum appropriate for our community of learners; as such it is rigorous, rooted in intellectual challenge and pace, and is underpinned by an appreciation of British values which develops students’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural experience.

The school’s curriculum develops from the KS2 National Curriculum, and follows the KS3 National Curriculum programmes of study. As such, teaching starts with prior learning and takes account of the needs of all our students; this is supported by our preferred pedagogy, which draws on Barak Rosenshine’s ‘Principles of Effective Instruction’. The curriculum at Ashlawn is therefore designed to provide continuity and progression between and within key stages and has a sharp focus on transition, and the transfer and development of knowledge and skills to be applied creatively. The curriculum is built on the principle of ‘progression’ and provides a range of opportunities for all our students.

## **2. Legislation and guidance**

This policy reflects the requirements of the National Curriculum programmes of study, which all maintained schools in England must teach.

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.

This policy reflects the requirements for academies to provide a broad and balanced curriculum as per the Academies Act 2010.

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.

All academies, including free schools, add/amend if applicable:

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

## **3. Roles and responsibilities**

### **3.1 The governing board**

The governing board will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the principal to account for its implementation.

The governing board 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, science and (subject to providing the right to withdraw) religious education, 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)
- Secondary schools only: All courses provided for pupils below the age of 19 that lead to qualifications, such as GCSEs and A-levels, are approved by the secretary of state
- The school implements the relevant statutory assessment arrangements
- It participates actively in decision-making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum

### **3.2 Headteacher**

The headteacher is 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 and indicate how the needs of individual pupils will be met
- The amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the governing board
- Maintained schools only: Where appropriate, the individual needs of some pupils are met by permanent or temporary disapplication from all or part of the National Curriculum
- They manage requests to withdraw children from curriculum subjects, where appropriate
- The school's procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements
- The governing board is fully involved in decision-making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum
- The governing board is 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

### 3.3 Other staff

Other staff will ensure that the school curriculum is implemented in accordance with this policy. The Vice Principal in charge of curriculum will oversee this, in collaboration with individual heads of department and heads of faculty within the school.

## 4. Organisation and planning

Students at Key Stage 3 enjoy a three year learning experience. Typically, the curriculum seeks to secure learning at the beginning of a key stage (Year 7, 10 and 12) before consolidating in the middle and then deepening at the end of the key stage. Students in the Year 9 cohort will choose their options in Year 9 and will then begin a 2-year GCSE.

Students at Key Stage 4 are able to study science as a combined subject discipline or across three specialist areas. For those students who study this later series of subjects, one of these subjects will operate in effect as an option subject.

At Key Stage 5 students typically study three Level 3 qualifications (or equivalents) over two years.

In Key Stage 3 (Years 7 to 9), all students study the sciences, English, maths, at least one language, geography, history, PE, RE, PSHE, art, drama, music, reading and computing. All Key Stage 3 students follow a DT curriculum which offers a 'taste' of the range of DT subjects available in Key Stage 4. In Year 7 students experience the first term as they rotate through a choice of three language subjects before they select their preference for continued study from the Spring Term of Year 7.

Two slightly different curricula are available at Ashlawn School with one for students who join us through selection whilst the other curriculum is available to students who have not chosen the selective route. All students follow the curriculum above whilst selective students have the opportunity to study two languages, additional qualifications in mathematics and the separate sciences.

We believe that literacy and reading are essential for students to fully access the curriculum and to achieve at the highest level. In Year 7 and 8, all students will develop their reading comprehension skills by a timetabled weekly reading programme designed to extend and enhance their vocabulary, levels of comprehension and knowledge of reading. Students entering Ashlawn with low prior attainment are offered an intensive programme of literacy and/or numeracy support in sessions which are tailored to their individual needs.

At Key Stage 4 (Years 10 and 11), all students follow a curriculum programme which includes 9 GCSEs (including the same compulsory core subjects). As an academic curriculum the majority of students will study the EBacc subjects (English, maths, science, a language, and a humanity subject) plus a number of high value option subjects. It is possible for students to study more than one foreign language and more than one humanities subject.

The option blocks are organised after the students in Year 9 have indicated their preferences for GCSE subjects and are designed, within timetabling and staffing constraints, to fit the optimum number of student choices for subject combinations.

Mathematics, English and science are taught in sets according to ability and, where timetabling makes this possible, modern languages and humanities may be set. The language chosen (French, German or Spanish) has been studied since Year 7 (unless a student is bilingual), although the opportunity for able linguists to start a new language is available if there is sufficient interest.

In addition to the examination courses the curriculum includes PE and a programme of personal, social and health education, RE, sex education and careers experience.

## **5. Inclusion**

Teachers set high expectations for all pupils. They will 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 will plan lessons so that pupils with SEN and/or disabilities can study every available 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.

Further information can be found in our statement of equality information and objectives, and in our SEN policy and information report.

## **6. Monitoring arrangements**

Academies insert: Governors monitor whether the school is complying with its funding agreement and teaching a “broad and balanced curriculum” which includes the required subjects, through regular visits to the school, feedback from the Principal and Vice Principal for curriculum, and updates on the in-school and external quality assurance systems in place. Heads of faculty monitor the way their subject is taught throughout the school by regular quality assurance, in conjunction with the Assistant Principal responsible for teaching and learning. This involves lesson visits, book and work scrutinies, and student voice. There are also extended reviews of each department (sometimes called ‘deep dives’) once a year. This policy will be reviewed every year by the Principal and Vice Principal overseeing curriculum. At every review, the policy will be shared with the full governing board.

## **7. Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Assessment policy
- Non-examination assessment policy
- SEN policy and information report
- Equality information and objectives
- Pupil Premium Policy