



# Curriculum Policy

Review Cycle: 2 Years – Autumn Term

Review By: Leadership Team, HR/Standards

Sub-Committee

# Curriculum Policy

## Principles

Our curriculum is built around our mission statement and strategic vision:

*Alcester Academy is an outstanding academy, delivering a high quality curriculum which allows all of our students to fulfil their academic potential. Our students become well-adjusted members of the community with high moral values and self-discipline. They progress successfully into their next phase of education, employment or training, holding a valuable combination of knowledge and skills for employment.*

Alcester Academy is:

- *An academy that offers a diverse curriculum which 'best fits' the desires of the students*
- *A place where students of all abilities fulfil their academic potential*
- *A place where students thrive as a result of excellent teaching*
- *An academy with a well-developed pastoral support system which offers a high level of care*
- *A place where behaviour does not inhibit the learning process*
- *An academy with a positive outward face*

The academy believes that the term curriculum should be understood in its broadest sense and that it comprises all learning and other experiences planned for its students. This policy is organised by considering the intent of the curriculum, its implementation and how its impact is assessed.

## 1. Curriculum Intent:

Alcester Academy has designed a curriculum that:

- is relevant, appropriate and engaging for all students
- offers breadth, balance and coherence for all
- permits continuity and progression, within and across year groups
- provides equality of opportunity for all students, promoting the development of inclusive learning opportunities
- provides an opportunity to celebrate and recognise achievement and success in academic subjects and in extra-curricular activities
- promotes students' spiritual, moral, cultural and social development
- helps to develop an understanding of personal, social and health issues such as drugs, sex and relationships and the importance of a healthy lifestyle
- helps each student gain a sense of self-worth, independence of thought and develop a questioning approach which challenges prejudice
- aims to develop students as flexible and independent learners
- provides careers advice and guidance throughout a student's time at the academy
- permits the development of ICT, numeracy and literacy across the curriculum
- enables all students to meet their full academic potential
- encourages students to take part in a wealth of extra-curricular and enrichment opportunities.

## 2. Curriculum Implementation:

### The timetable

The academy operates a one week timetable. There are 5 teaching periods per day, each of which last for 1 hour. There are 25 teaching periods each week.

Each morning has a 20 minute registration slot, when students attend year group assemblies in a weekly cycle. Afternoon registration is taken at 12.35 as part of that lesson (every lesson is formally registered).

### **General principles**

- In addition to the formal taught curriculum, an extensive range of extra-curricular clubs and activities, subject enrichment and trips and visits are offered to all students.
- All students take part in formal assemblies. These follow a structured programme centred around PSHE, SMSC and British Values.
- There is a programme of careers education throughout a student's time at the academy.
- Students are taught in ability based groups in English, maths and science. All other subject areas teach to broadly mixed ability sets.
- Students also follow a programme of personal, social and health education throughout their time at the academy.
- All students in years 7-10 engage in tutor activities based around literacy, numeracy and SMSC. This provides 1 hour of additional wider learning per week. In year 11 students engage in either English or maths activities in their tutor time depending on needs
- The provision of subjects in all Key Stages is reviewed regularly. Any issues relating to a subject, or discussions of possible new subjects, are discussed at the Governors' Teaching, Learning & Achievement Group.

### **Key Stage 3**

- We offer all students a two year Key Stage 3. Students experience a full range of subjects with the focus being the development of knowledge and skills. It forms the foundations of the next phase of learning.
- All students study English, maths, science, philosophy and ethics, PE, art, design and technology, geography, history, ICT/computing, music and drama.
- All students study a language. For the majority of students we deliver French and German. For our weakest students on entry we deliver just French.

### **Key Stage 4**

In Key Stage 4 students follow a core curriculum plus four optional subjects. We have maintained 4 optional subjects to maintain breadth within our curriculum, whilst allowing sufficient time for the subjects studied to be covered in depth. There is a temptation to reduce the optional subjects to increase the time spent in quite a narrow curriculum in order to maximise points for league table standings. We firmly believe that this is wrong and a curriculum must support a child's ambitions over and above a school's desire to achieve positive headline data.

- We offer all students a three year Key Stage 4 as we believe this offers a number of advantages varying from subject to subject:
  - o some can deliver the full GCSE specification in fewer lessons per week as it is spread across three years allowing us to maintain breadth
  - o some can teach additional qualifications beyond the GCSE specification
  - o some can teach beyond the specification and enrich the curriculum
  - o it allows students to specialise early and have additional teaching time in smaller classes.
- Students follow a common pathway of English language, English literature, mathematics, science, RE, PE (non-examined).
- Students are encouraged to study the English Baccalaureate, but not forced. The value of the Ebacc is fully explained to parents and students during the options process. A strong emphasis is placed upon history, geography, French and German.
- In addition to history, geography, French and German we also offer: media studies, art, photography, food, music, ICT, sport, design and technology – wood, design and technology – textiles, computing, performing arts, child care.
- All examinations are taken at the end of year 11 to maintain our philosophy of allowing sufficient time for subjects to be taught in their full breadth and depth.

### **Adapting the curriculum for individual students**

The Headteacher has powers in relation to the day-to-day management of the curriculum by virtue of her office and she shares this responsibility with the Deputy Headteacher. Where adapting the curriculum is a decision which the academy wishes to implement, parental consent will be sought. Any requests from parents relating to an adaptation of a student's curriculum must be made in writing to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will then make the final decision relating to any changes. This may include the number of subjects studied and the qualifications entered for. The decision will always be made in the best long term interests of the child.

### **3. Curriculum impact**

The impact of our curriculum is assessed by considering:

- external examination results at GCSE and those vocational subjects delivered, including the numbers gaining top grades in a wide variety of subjects
- the range and variety of extra-curricular and enrichment activities and students' participation in them
- the onward post 16 destinations of students from year 11
- the numbers of students applying to join the School in year 7 since this curriculum philosophy has been introduced
- the proportion of students who are able to choose the courses they want to at GCSE
- annual reviews of the PSHE, SMSC coverage in lessons, assemblies, tutor work and our programme of Super Learning Days.

### **Appendices:**

1. Timing of the academy day
2. Curriculum Model 2023-2024

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Chair of Governors

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Headteacher

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(ratified by the Full Governing Body on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2023  
with the 2024-2025 curriculum plan added)

### Appendix 1 – Times of the Academy day

The academy operates two standard school days. As a day to day model we follow a 4:1 model i.e. 4 lessons before lunch and 1 after. However, during the exams period and when the alternative curriculum dictates, we operate a 3:2 day.

4:1 Normal School Day	3:2 Exams School Day
8.48am Warning Bell 8.50am – 9.10am Tutor Time 9.10am – 10.10am Period 1 10.10am – 11.10am Period 2 11.10am – 11.35am Break 11.33am Warning Bell 11.35am – 12.35pm Period 3 12.35pm – 1.35pm Period 4 1.35pm – 2.20pm Lunch 1.55pm Settle Bell 2.23pm Warning Bell 2.25pm Lesson start bell 2.25pm – 3.25pm Period 5	8.48am Warning Bell 8.50am – 9.10am Tutor Time 9.10am – 10.10am Period 1 10.10am – 11.10am Period 2 11.10am – 11.30am Break 11.33am Warning Bell 11.35am – 12.35pm Period 3 12.35pm – 1.20pm Lunch 12.55pm Settle Bell 1.23pm Warning Bell 1.25pm – 2.25pm Period 4 2.25pm Lesson start bell 2.25pm – 3.25pm Period 5

## Appendix 2: Curriculum Model 2024/25

## SCHOOL CURRICULUM PLAN 2024-25

Hours of study																										
Yr	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	
7	English			PD	Maths			Science			PE	Religious Studies	Geography	History	Art	French	German or Xeng	ICT	Drama	Music	DT					
8	English			Maths			Science			PE	Religious Studies	Geography	History	Art	French	German or Xeng	ICT	Drama	Music	DT						
9	English				Maths				Science				Religious Studies	PE	<b>Block A</b> History Geography Art Photography French Computing Xeng+Ma	<b>Block B</b> History Geography Res Mats Art German Stat+ F Ma	<b>Block C</b> History Geography Sport Textiles French Imedia	<b>Block D</b> History Geography IMedia BTEC Perf. Arts French Media Studies Food								
10	English				Maths				Science				Religious Studies	PE	<b>Block A</b> History Geography Art Photography German Food Xeng+Ma	<b>Block B</b> History Geography Res Mats Art BTEC Music German Stat+ F Ma	<b>Block C</b> History Geography Sport Textiles French	<b>Block D</b> History Geography IMedia BTEC Perf. Arts Computing French Media Studies								
11	English				Maths				Science				Religious Studies	PE + Intervention	<b>Block A</b> History Geography Art Photography German French Res Mat Xtra Eng/Ma	<b>Block B</b> History Geography Food Art BTEC Music Stat+ F Ma German	<b>Block C</b> History Geography Sport Textiles French	<b>Block D</b> History Geography Imedia Media Studies BTEC Perf. Arts Computing French								