

Fairfax Academy Curriculum Statement 2023/2024

Introduction

This curriculum statement is split into 3 sections:

1. The INTENT of the curriculum which outlines the rationale behind its design, content and sequencing;
2. The IMPLEMENTATION of the curriculum which is concerned with curriculum delivery, in terms of teaching, assessment and feedback and how leaders and teachers respond to this;
3. The IMPACT of the curriculum which is concerned with how the effectiveness of the curriculum is evaluated to support leaders, teachers and students.

1. The Intent of Fairfax's Curriculum

The Academy curriculum aims to ensure that all pupils in the Academy experience a rich, broad and balanced experience, reflecting the FMAT mission of 'Enriching lives, transforming futures'. We want all of our students to leave the Academy ready to contribute positively to modern British society, become valuable and responsible citizens and have a suitable career and destination.

All of our students, no matter what their background, have an entitlement to, and have access to, a rich, broad and balanced curriculum.

In the timetabled academic curriculum all students have access to the 'powerful knowledge' that can be provided by a broad range of subject disciplines. We believe all students are able to become experts in the subject disciplines they study. The Academy's subject experts have decided what 'powerful knowledge' should be taught in their subject, how it will be sequenced and have also identified what students should know, understand and be able to do by key 'end points'.

The wider curriculum is delivered through timetabled guidance/personal development lessons, form time and a calendared enrichment programme. An extra-curricular programme that fully promotes the Arts and Sport is also available to all students and participation in any voluntary enrichment activities is actively encouraged through our House system. The Academy believes that our enrichment offer develops character and our dedicated Heads of House prioritise, and monitor, student engagement in our wider curriculum.

In all aspects of the curriculum, we place a strong emphasis on nurturing the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our students and we believe it is important that all of our students can form a sense of justice and have clear moral code to guide them through their lives.

We also believe that good literacy is vital to the future success of our students and as a result all teachers at Fairfax have been trained in our eight core features of strong literacy teaching (see Literacy Policy 2022-23 for further details). Literacy activities and focused reading also form a key part of our form time programme for students.

In every aspect of Academy life students are encouraged to meet our Academy motto "Sinceretas Laboris: there is dignity in hard work" and alongside this students are rewarded for demonstrating

the values that we believe make highly successful individuals: Ambition, Respect, Kindness and Safety or the “Fairfax ARKS”.

Curriculum plans

Curriculum plans in each subject provide support and clarity around our curriculum to ensure all teachers, leaders and students are aware of:

- What the subject curriculum is building towards and what our students need to know to reach the end point successfully;
- How and why the subject curriculum is sequenced to ensure students successfully reach their end point by retaining knowledge so they know more, understand more and have the skills to do more

2. The Implementation of Fairfax’s Curriculum

Key Stage 3

At Key Stage 3 the three year curriculum provides our students with the full breadth of National Curriculum subjects delivered across 25 x 1-hour periods per week. We believe that each subject is unique in the way it should be implemented within the classroom and therefore students are taught in ability-based groups or mixed-ability groups depending on the needs of the subject and the students.

Structure of the KS3 Curriculum

Subject	Number of hours per week
English	4
Science	4
Mathematics	3
PE	2
French/German	2
Art	1
Business and Computing	1
Design and Technology	1
Drama	1
Food and Nutrition	1
Geography	1
Guidance (PSHE)	1
History	1
Music	1
Religious Education	1

Some of our students receive additional support and are taught in smaller groups depending on their individual needs. Most interventions are tightly focused and only last a short period of time. This means that students quickly return to their normal timetabled lesson and continue to experience the

full breadth and depth of curriculum. On rare occasions, a student may be removed from a subject to have additional Maths or English support. This decision will only be made if leaders have identified that a student's Maths or English ability is making it impossible for them to engage with, and make progress in another subject. In these situations, leaders will communicate with the student, parents and any other relevant professionals, to agree on whether withdrawing the student from a subject permanently to focus on English/Maths would be in their best interests.

The content, structure and sequencing within the curriculum of each subject has been determined by:

- the needs of our students given the context of the Academy and its community;
- the relevant Key stage 3 National Curriculum programme of study;
- regular assessments that allow leaders to evaluate the effectiveness of their curriculum and make appropriate and timely changes (See IMPACT section). Some students arrive in year 7 having already fallen behind in mathematics and English. These students receive additional support in both subjects in order to 'catch-up'.

Key Stage 4

We strongly believe that an effective curriculum is not "one size fits all". We design our curriculum to meet the needs of every student by ensuring they have access to the individualised pathways and additional support that best suits them. We place the needs of the students at the heart of their curriculum choices. We offer a range of GCSE and vocational subjects through bespoke pathways that aim to ensure our students achieve their potential and are prepared for their next stage in education and life. We believe that each subject is unique in the way it should be implemented within the classroom and therefore students are taught in ability-based groups or mixed-ability groups depending on the needs of the subject and the students.

Pathway 1		Pathway 2		Pathway 3	
Subject	Number of hours per week	Subject	Number of hours per week	Subject	Number of hours per week
English	5	English	5	English	5
Science	5	Science	5	Science	5
Mathematics	4	Mathematics	4	Mathematics	4
Core PE	1	Core PE	1	Core PE	1
Personal Development	1	Personal Development	1	Personal Development	1
History/Geography	3	History/Geography	3	History/Geography	3
French/German	3	Free Option A	3	Vocational Option A/ASDAN	3
Free Option B	3	Free Option B	3	Vocational Option B/ASDAN	3

The option subjects available to students at Key Stage 4 are:

GCSE Art
GCSE Business
GCSE Computer Science

GCSE Drama
GCSE Design Technology
GCSE Food preparation and nutrition
GCSE French
GCSE Geography
GCSE German
GCSE History
GCSE RE
GCSE Music
OCR Cambridge National in Health and Social Care
OCR Cambridge National in Creative iMedia

To ensure that students select the most appropriate subjects for their career aspirations our students are supported in a variety of ways.

- Throughout Years 7 – 9, the CEIAG team runs a careers programme, which includes free access to online careers guidance software.
- A Year 9 Options Evening is held in January for students to be informed of the options process.
- This is followed by a Parents Evening in early February where all subject teachers discuss with students and parents any queries about their specialist courses and a student's aptitude for them.
- The Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) team run assemblies, individual meetings and advice sessions throughout the year as well as drop-in sessions at lunchtimes. They also run visits to universities and engage with a variety of careers organisations to raise awareness of the opportunities available for students.

The content, structure and sequencing within the Key Stage 4 curriculum of each subject has been determined by:

- the needs of our students given the context of the Academy and its community;
- the relevant specification;
- regular assessments that allow leaders to evaluate the effectiveness of their curriculum and make appropriate and timely changes.

Key Stage 5

At Key Stage 5 most students study three subjects and have five hours of teaching in each subject per week.

The Academy offers a curriculum of Level 3 Qualifications, following on from GCSE study. A wide range of A Level and Level 3 Vocational subjects are available for students to study including:

Accounting (A Level)
Applied Science (BTEC National)
Art (A Level)
Biology (A Level)
Business (A Level)
Chemistry (A Level)

Dance (A Level)
Design and Technology: Product Design (A Level)
Drama (A Level)
Economics (A Level)
English Language (A Level)
English Literature (A Level)
Food (BTEC National)
French (A Level)
Further Mathematics (A Level)
Geography (A Level)
German (A Level)
Health and Social Care (Cambridge National)
History (A Level)
ICT (BTEC National)
Law (A Level)
Mathematics (A Level)
Philosophy & Ethics (A Level)
Physics (A Level)
Psychology (A Level)
Sociology (A Level)
Sport (BTEC National)
(Please note, the above list is subject to change)

Students are also given directed study time on their timetable to support them in developing their independent learning skills.

The content, structure and sequencing within the Key Stage 5 curriculum of each subject has been determined by:

- the needs of our students given the context of the Academy and its community;
- the relevant specification;
- regular assessments that allow leaders to evaluate the effectiveness of their curriculum and make appropriate and timely changes.

Advice and guidance for future careers is an important part of our Sixth Form curriculum. Students are prepared for the work place in a number of ways:

- Early identification of each student's future goals which then leads to an individualised programme of careers advice based on their requirements.
- A planned careers and personal wellbeing programme for Year 12 and 13, with outside speakers working with our students in workshop scenarios.
- A Work Experience week in Year 12.

There are also widespread opportunities for Sixth Form students to benefit from the wider curriculum and develop skills of leadership, collaboration, competition and performance. Some of these opportunities include:

- House Council
- House Captains

- Sports Captains
- School Council
- Form Reps
- Eisteddfod
- Prefect
- Senior Prefect
- Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme
- World Challenge
- Peer Mentoring
- Social Club
- Lead Learners
- Super Sums
- Reading Buddies
- Debate Team

Character education is an important part of our Sixth Form curriculum and students are actively encouraged to participate in the wider curriculum.

All students also have access to a Learning Mentor and any student who is identified as not making the expected progress has a half termly progress meeting to support them in reaching their potential.

Delivery of Lessons Across All Key Stages

Individual lessons at Fairfax are delivered using a teaching model rooted in modern research. This model is known as the FMAT 'Teaching for Excellence' model. The model identifies the following features as being essential to excellent teaching and should be features of all lessons:

- Quality Explanation
- Effective Modelling
- Quality Questioning
- Deliberate Practice
- Challenge
- Purposeful Feedback

3. The Impact of Fairfax's Curriculum

We recognise that leaders must be continually evaluating their curriculum to ensure it is having the required impact on students both in terms of academic progress and on a personal level. This impact is evaluated in a variety of ways including:

- Regular formative assessment of student progress through the planned curriculum.
 - Teachers regularly discuss the impact of their curriculum in subject meetings based on their regular formative assessments in lessons. Decisions are then taken to adapt the curriculum where necessary.
- Internally planned summative assessments
 - Summative assessments are planned in the curriculum to ensure that students are making the expected level of progress. This assessment data helps teachers and subject leaders identify how well students have retained the information they have

been taught and adaptations will be made to the curriculum based on the results from these assessments.

- Faculty/Subject Reviews
 - A programme of Faculty/Subject reviews is calendared. These reviews are a supportive process where subject leaders review the intent, implementation and impact of their subject's curriculum and areas for development are identified.
- Learning Walks/Lesson Drop Ins
 - Leaders at Fairfax regularly observe teaching across the Academy to quality assure the standards in the Academy and ensure that teaching is effective in impacting positively on student progress.
- Book Trawls
 - Regular book trawls are conducted to review the impact by looking at the work produced in student books.
- Student Voice
 - Student voice is taken at key points in the academic year to review the impact of the curriculum.
- Analysis of Destination Data
 - Destination data is reviewed on an annual basis as a way of assessing the effectiveness of the curriculum.
- Analysis of External Assessment Data
 - GCSE and A Level results are analysed as a way of judging the impact of the taught curriculum.
 - GL Assessments in English and Maths are sat at the end of Year 7, 8 and 9 and provide another way of judging the impact of the taught curriculum in those subjects.

If you wish to discuss any aspect of this curriculum statement please contact Mrs R Boyce (Vice Principal) at r.boyce@fairfax.fmat.co.uk