



The Thomas Adams School & Sixth Form

Curriculum Policy

Updated October 2021

Reviewed by Governors

Date of next review: October 2022

Review Cycle: Every 1 year

1. Curriculum Intent Statement

“A framework for setting out the aims of a programme of education, including the knowledge and understanding to gained at each stage”

“Our curriculum is ambitious and engaging. It is designed to give all pupils knowledge, understanding, confidence and a strong sense of self, whilst developing relevant skills they need to contribute to their community and to the wider society.”

Curriculum Values

Our curriculum seeks to give pupils opportunities for:

Respect

- To develop personal values of hard work, respect, tolerance and justice;
- To understand the global community in which they live and the interdependence of individuals, groups and societies;
- To develop appreciation and ownership for the environment.

Resilience

- To apply understanding and skills in order to address issues, solve problems and overcome barriers to progress;
- To develop the attitudes, understanding and skills necessary, in the modern world, to exercise independence and initiative.

Success

- To enjoy learning and come to see education as a life-long process.
- To reach personal goals and achieve one’s full potential.

Curriculum Principles

The curriculum in practice must ensure that:

- it is a progressive model that is regularly reviewed;
- it will provide a sequence of content necessary for pupils to make progress;
- the use of assessment is intelligent and informs curriculum design;
- it provides experiences which promote active and purposeful learning;
- it raises pupils’ expectations, encourages participation and increases self-confidence and independence;
- it allows individual pupils to progress at a pace which provides both challenge and support;
- it provides retrieval of core knowledge, builds deeper understanding and offers opportunities to apply skills learnt.

“A knowledge-engaged curriculum approach, where knowledge and skills are intertwined.”

2. Legislation and guidance

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

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 we have 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](#).

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the Headteacher 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, 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 (SEND)
- 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
- Pupils from Year 8 onwards are provided with independent, impartial careers guidance, and that this is appropriately resourced.

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
- 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 SEND

3.3 Other staff

Other staff will ensure that the school curriculum is implemented in accordance with this policy.

- **Subject Leaders** provide specific steer on subject curriculum design ensuring that it adheres to the school curriculum intent statement. Examination qualifications are implemented to meet the needs of our pupils and provide clear pathways to future learning or employment. This is supported by Key Stage 3 curricular that are mapped and provide threads of learning in preparation for Key Stage 4 and beyond. They also provide opportunities and experiences that encompass the School's curriculum values and principles.
- **The SENDCo** tailors specific provision to meet the needs of pupils on EHCPs, Graduated Support and all other pupils with requirements for special educational support.
- **The Careers Leader** enriches the curriculum offer by providing a service which meets the Gatsby Benchmarks. They support Subject Leaders in embedding careers education into their curriculum delivery and provide our pupils with the opportunities and experiences to develop employability skills.
- **The Curriculum Drop Down Leader** organises and facilitates 6 days throughout the academic year which focus on the wider curriculum such as Relationship, Health and Sex education, SMSC, British Values, Citizenship and Careers Education.

4. Organisation and planning

Curriculum approach

The School aims to provide a broad and balanced curriculum that meets all statutory requirements, enriched by a wide range of additional opportunities for learning and personal development. To provide a choice of pathways as students' progress through the school, preparing students thoroughly for relevant qualifications at the end of each key stage. To enable all students to become **successful** learners, confident and **resilient** individuals and **respectful** citizens.

To comply with the DfE Funding agreement and embed moral and ethical ideals to our curriculum delivery we expect:

- Any views or theories that are contrary to established scientific or historical evidence and explanations are not to be taught as evidence-based
- To teach evolution as a comprehensive, coherent and extensively evidenced theory
- Political issues to be handled in a balanced way
- To actively promote the British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
To promote principles that support equality of opportunity for all
- To provide independent and impartial careers advice to pupils from Year 8 onwards

Curriculum Design

In Year 7, pupils are predominantly taught in their mixed ability form groups. However, some setting by ability happens in English, Mathematics, French and PE. This is based on Key Stage 2 outcomes and prior data collections, both formal and informal, taken in the Autumn term.

In all subsequent years, where possible, pupils are set by ability in the majority of subjects. There are frequent assessments of students and the composition of sets is changed according to performance based on these regular reviews.

Curriculum mapping for each subject area can be located on the school website.

Parents / Carers can access the "Curriculum" section of the school website for key information or contact the school and request to speak to the Deputy Headteacher for Quality of Education or Subject Leaders.

Year 7

- Pupils are taught in mixed groups across the curriculum throughout the year with the exception of English, Mathematics, French and PE.
- In English, Mathematics and French the timetable is constructed to allow a setting arrangement in both halves of the cohort. The Year 7 cohort is normally setted in both halves of the year group during the Autumn term.
- Technology is taught in mixed ability groups across Year 7 to allow a consistent diet.
- PE divides its pupils into single sex ability groups across the year group.

Year 8

- Setting arrangements exist in each half of the year group in English, Maths, Science and French.
- Mixed-ability groups continue to exist across Year 8 in Technology.
- Art, Drama and Music have broadly banded groupings in Year 8, based on pupils' abilities across the subject areas.
- RE, Geography, History and ICT set according to pupils' ability in Humanities. A consensus is arrived at between the departments, based on a pupil's achievements across the subject areas.
- PE continues with a similar grouping arrangement to Year 7.

Year 9

- Similar setting and grouping arrangements occur as in Year 8, although content covered provides preparation for Key Stage 4 qualifications, with programmes of studies adjusted to meet these expectations.

Years 10 and 11

- English, Maths and Science set based upon ability across the year group. In English, lower sets focus on English Literature and these groups sit the examination during the Year 10 Summer series. Higher sets cover both disciplines and sit their English Language and Literature examinations in the Year 11 Summer series (along with the lower sets that sit the English Language papers during this series). Science operate a "carousel" delivery model ensuring that students have content delivered by experts in each discipline.
- French set based on ability.
- PE Core Programme (Activity Pathways) is delivered in mixed ability groups.
- Option subjects are generally taught in mixed ability groups, but a certain amount of setting may occur when there is more than one group being taught in a subject area. These subjects include: Fine Art, Art 3D, Business Studies (GCSE, Cambridge National), Certificate of Personal Effectiveness

(ASDAN), Drama, Geography, Graphics, Psychology, History, Music, PE (BTEC), RE, Design and Technology [Catering, Product Design, Textiles], Music, Computer Science, ICT, Health and Social Care, Triple Science.

- A Vocational Pathway is offered to a small number of pupils and incorporates the following:
 - one day of work experience per week
 - subject areas of English, Maths, Science, Design and Technology, ICT, PE
 - the opportunity to complete the Certificate of Personal Effectiveness (ASDAN)
 - additional support for post-16 options and external employment-based qualifications.
- For SEND and ECHP pupils, a modified and bespoke curriculum offer is provided aimed at meeting their individual needs; arrangements for this are led by the SENDCo.

Post 16

Thomas Adams Sixth Form currently offers the following courses as Level 3 qualifications (A Level/BTEC/CTEC):

Art, Biology, Business Studies, Chemistry, Computer Science, Drama and Theatre Studies, English Combined, English Language, English Literature, Extended Project Qualification, Film Studies, Food Science, French, Further Mathematics, Geography, Politics, Graphic Design, Health and Social Care, History, Sport, ICT, Mathematics, Music, Photography, Physics, Product Design, Psychology, Religious Studies, Sociology and Textiles.

Year 12 and Year 13:

- Students typically study three subjects at A Level/BTEC/CTEC
- In Year 12, subjects are taught for five hours a week, with students spending five additional timetabled hours a week in our Study Hub
- In Year 13, subjects are taught for four hours a week, with students spending five additional timetabled hours a week in our Study Hub
- English and/or Maths, GCSE retakes are offered. Resitting GCSE Maths and/or English is compulsory, should a student have not achieved a level 4 or above at the end of Year 11

16-19 Study Programme

Our 6th form curriculum offer complies with the guidance issued by the DfE guidance by adhering to the following key principles:-

- All students funded through the 16 to 19 funding methodology are enrolled on a study programme.
- All study programmes have a core aim. This will be tailored to the needs of the individual and typically include a substantial qualification (academic or technical).
- All study programmes include the opportunity for work experience.
- Study programmes are flexible programmes built around the needs of individual students.

All 16 to 19 study programmes are designed to provide students with a structured and challenging learning programme that supports their development and progression in line with their career plans. These include:-

- substantial qualifications that stretch students and prepare them for education at the next level or for employment.
- English and maths where students have not yet achieved a GCSE grade 4
- work experience to give students the opportunity to develop their career choices and to apply their skills in real working conditions

- other non-qualification activity to develop students' character, broader skills, attitudes and confidence, and to support progression.

Each study programme will consist of a number of planned hours (meaning hours that have been timetabled and are supervised by the provider). Providers must ensure that the number of hours are realistic and deliverable.

Study programmes are designed to be full-time with a minimum of 540 planned hours per academic year (as per our funding guidance, we expect full-time study programmes for 16 and 17 year olds to be on average 600 hours).

Students with SEND are given the support they need to access their study programme. The 6th form takes particular care to tailor study programmes to the individual aspirations and needs of students with SEND, in discussion with the student.

Work experience is a key component of 16 to 19 study programme. It aims to give young people the opportunity to develop their career choices, get a first taste of work, and develop those critical employability skills needed for real working conditions. All students are expected to undertake work experience or work-related training as part of their study programme.

Wider Curriculum

Details on how the wider curriculum is delivered, can be found in the following policy statements:

- Relationships, health and sex education
- SMSC (including British Values)
- CEIAG

Support for Curriculum Implementation

All departments have curriculum mapping documents that provide an oversight of delivery, supported by schemes of learning. These schemes of learning provide details on content to be delivered and suggested methods for teaching. These allow staff to create bespoke lesson plans to meet the needs of their pupils. The teaching is expected to be structured, planned and based on high expectations that allow students of all ability to progress.

The curriculum is supported by a range of physical resources including; Science labs, indoor and outdoor sports facilities, a Drama studio, ICT hardware and software, a library and Sixth Form Study Hubs.

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 SEND
- Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)

Teachers will plan lessons so that pupils with SEND can study all of the National Curriculum subjects we offer, 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 SEND policy and information report.

6. Monitoring arrangements

Governors / Senior Leadership monitor whether the school is complying with its funding agreement and teaching a "broad and balanced curriculum" which includes the required subjects, through:

- Governor Day Visits
- Curriculum Committee
- Curriculum Reviews
- Governor Reports
- Book Looks
- Curriculum Drop Ins
- Line Management Cycle
- Data Reviews
- School Leadership Meetings
- Examination Outcome Reviews

Subject Leaders monitor the way their subject is taught throughout the school by:

- Internal Book Looks
- Standardisation / Moderation Meetings
- Department Meetings
- Subject Curriculum Drop Ins
- Subject Curriculum Review
- Data Reviews
- Examiners Reports

Subject Leaders also have responsibility for monitoring the way in which resources are stored and managed.

This policy will be reviewed every year by the Senior Leader that has oversight of the 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
- NEA policy
- SEND policy
- Equality Information and Objectives
- CEIAG policy
- Most Able policy
- Relationships, Health and Sex Education policy
- SMSC (including British Values)
- Pupil Premium (Recovery) policy
- Monitoring and Evaluation policy