



# **CURRICULUM POLICY**

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**Review Date: September 2023**

## **Introduction**

The Vale Academy provides education for students aged from 11-19 years. The academy is firmly committed to the principle of providing a broad and balanced curriculum for all students. The academy aims to provide a broad and balanced curriculum with highest quality of learning and teaching.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of the Curriculum Policy Statement is to detail how the curriculum serves the needs of all students. To this end, the academy aims:

- to construct a curriculum that is ambitious and designed to give all pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND, the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life.
- to have a curriculum which is coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge and skills for future learning and employment.
- to recognise the individual needs and talents of each student and to facilitate development of their intellectual, moral, physical, spiritual and creative capacities;
- to ensure that the curriculum incorporates statutory requirements, reflects the academy's strengths and yet is flexible and relevant to SEND students' needs developing their knowledge, skills and abilities to apply what they know and can do with increasing fluency and independence.
- to prepare students for the world of work and lifelong learning;
- to promote the core British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

## **Philosophy/Intent**

The curriculum is designed to be broad, balanced, relevant and meeting the needs of individual learners in order to support good or outstanding progress. The curriculum has been carefully sequenced to ensure that learner receive a logical curriculum that aids knowledge retention. The range of subjects helps students acquire knowledge, understanding and skills in all aspects of their education. It needs to be constantly reviewed to ensure that we are giving our students the best opportunities and to ensure that it is in line with current education department/academy sponsor recommendations.

The curriculum in Key Stage 3 (Years 7, 8 & 9) follows the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum. All students to access a modern foreign language. Students who receive bespoke intervention packages may be re integrated into the curriculum at any point. In Year 7 students are set in English, maths and science based on their KS2 results and teacher assessments.

In Key Stage 4 (Years 10-11) all students study maths and GCSE Science Trilogy. They also study GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature courses. An increasing proportion study a Modern Foreign Language and the academy is moving towards compulsory MFL. In addition to these core subjects, all students choose 3 options, at least one of which must be from the EBacc suite of qualifications. A range of GCSEs, BTECs and other accredited courses are offered as optional subjects. The EBacc option blocks receives three hours teaching time per week with the non EBacc options averaging 2.5 hours a week over 2 years.

At post-16, through our federated sixth form, we offer a wide array of Level 3 (Advanced), courses both academic and vocational and have offered a smaller number of Level 2 (GCSE equivalent)

courses. The Post-16 curriculum is enhanced by a personal development input covering topics such as career and HE planning, financial awareness and study skills. All students meet the 540 hours guidelines for full time education. In addition, strong links with external agencies are used to promote opportunities for community and voluntary work.

## Subject offer and student setting 2021/22

### Key Stage 3

During Key Stage 3 (Years 7, 8 & 9) all students study the same subjects as required by the National Curriculum, in addition to Religious Studies, computing is studied as a discrete subject at Key Stage 3. The aim of the curriculum is to give all students a wide breadth of subjects and to equip them with the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life.

#### Year 7, 8 & 9

- Students are taught in sets for English, maths and science.
- Students are taught in banded mixed ability groups for the non-core subjects.
- Design & Technology continues to be taught in smaller, mixed ability, but banded, groups.
- Music is supported through drop down music experiences.

Subject	Year 7 Periods	Year 8 Periods	Year 9 Periods	% KS3 Time
English	4	4	4	16
Maths	4	4	4	16
MFL	2	2	2	8
Science	3	3	4	13.3
Design & Tech	1	2	2	6
PE	2	2	1	6.6
History	2	2	2	8
Geography	2	2	2	8
Music	1	0.5	0.5	3
Art	1	1	1	4
Drama	1	0.5	0.5	3
Computing	1	1	1	4
Religious Studies	1	1	1	4
Total	25	25	25	100

### Key Stage 4

- During KS4 (Years 10 & 11) all students follow English, Maths and Science.
- An increasing number of students study a Modern Foreign Language as the Academy moves to make this compulsory for students in future.
- All students then choose a subject in each of three option blocks.
- The EPC covers Citizenship/RS Lessons and is undertaken in 2 x 30-minute sessions
- Core PE is followed as a non-examined subject.

Subject	Year 10 Sessions	Year 11 Sessions
Science (Trilogy - 2 GCSEs, unless students opt for Separate Science)	5	5
English Language / Literature	5	5
Maths	4	4
MFL pathway	3	3
Intervention / Statistics pathways	2	2
PE	1	1

Option Periods (Number of periods per option)	8 (3 / 3 / 2)	8 (3 / 2 / 3)
Total Hours	25 (MFL 26)	25 (MFL 26)

<b>Ebacc Subjects Offered (GCSE)</b>	<b>Other Subject Offered</b>
<b>History</b> <b>Geography</b> <b>French</b> <b>Spanish</b> <b>Computer Science</b>	<b>Music (GCSE &amp; BTEC)</b> <b>PE (GCSE and BTEC)</b> <b>OCR National Sport Studies</b> <b>Drama</b> <b>NCFE Art and Design (Graphic Products)</b> <b>Food and Nutrition</b> <b>Textiles</b> <b>Product Design</b> <b>Art</b> <b>Separate Science – Biology, Chemistry and Physics</b>

### **Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural Education**

The curriculum contributes to students' behaviour and welfare including their physical, mental and personal wellbeing, safety and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through cross curricular themes within the curriculum. Each year group attends assembly one day a week and in Key Stage 3 there is provision for half an hour silent reading of an age and ability appropriate book. The EPC programme covering the National Curriculum guidelines for PSHE is cover in 2 sessions per week. Intervention is incorporated into the Key Stage 4 curriculum to mitigate the impact of Covid.

In addition, Sex and Relationship Education is delivered via an external provider (Big Talk Education) and some aspects of Citizenship are provided for through drop down activities.

## Post-16

- Students entering for advanced level study will normally study 3 A levels or equivalent in Year 12
- The minimum entry requirement for the advanced level course is 5 GCSE at grade 5/C or above.
- Individual subjects may specify a GCSE grade above 5/C as an entry requirement to a course.
- Private Study/Community Service/Work Placement completes a programme of study which exceeds the 540hrs a year guideline for all students

### Year 12 Advanced level programme

Activity	Year 12 Periods	% Time
3 A level subjects	12	48
Private study/community service/work placement	12	48
PSHCE / EPC	1	4

### Year 13 Advanced level programme

Activity	Year 12 Periods	% Time
3 A level subjects	12	48
Private study/community service	12	48
PSHCE / EPC	1	4

## **Examination Entry**

It is academy policy to enter all students for public examinations in the courses they have been following. In exceptional circumstances, such as significant amount of coursework being uncompleted, the academy may withdraw a student's entry for one or more examinations.

## **Extra-Curricular and Enrichment Activities**

A wide variety of sporting (Eg football, hockey, netball, rugby, badminton, orienteering, athletics, cricket, rounders, dodgeball), artistic (samba, taiko, woodwind, string, swing, brass, choirs, school production and plays) and academic (history, technology, science, media, geography) activities complement the academy's formal curriculum.

Students are given numerous opportunities to perform in concerts and the school production and are able to represent the academy competitively in a number of sports. Students can earn their colours for taking part in these opportunities. The academy runs a wide range of trips and visits and although these were curtailed by Covid, these are set to return in 2021-2022.