

A 'GREAT' Curriculum for a 'GREAT' community

We believe that education is the key that opens the door to opportunity and that every child has the potential to prove that anything is possible. Through our curriculum we aim to provide the conditions where ambition thrives through a culture of high challenge and continuous personal and professional growth, underpinned by our GREAT Academy values of **Gratitude, Responsibility, Excellence, Aspiration** and **Tenacity**. These values sit at the epicentre of our curriculum and underpin our Academy culture and ethos where working hard and being kind lead to 'choice filled lives' and social justice for all.

GRATITUDE through experience

We believe that all children have an entitlement to a broad and balanced knowledge led curriculum. Our curriculum offers all learners a rich and culturally diverse experience both in and outside the classroom. Our curriculum is expertly designed to foster a love of learning and an appreciation for the opportunities offered through carefully planned experiences throughout the Academy. Our curriculum design is deliberately challenging and whilst we use the knowledge base of the National Curriculum, our '7-year learning journey' is carefully constructed on a bedrock of highly ambitious knowledge which builds on the challenge outlined in KS2. We strengthen our curriculum through collaboration and partnership with primary experts so that there is no lost learning and the continuum of challenge remains unbroken following transition from the primary sector. Subject experts co-construct our curriculum and focus on depth of learning as well as breadth of knowledge. Learners are exposed to unique and enriching experiences that develop their wider understanding of their local context as well as their own cultural heritage alongside wider exposure to experiences that develop a greater depth of understanding of the world in which they live and their place within it.

Learners are continually supported to develop and grow personally and socially as well as academically. Our wide ranging and uniquely diverse enrichment programme offers a breadth and depth of experience that introduce learners to new and exciting opportunities that they are yet to encounter. Our student leadership programme, academy trips, cultural visits and careers and employability activity all provide additional opportunities to develop character and cultural capital and are carefully planned to compliment academic excellence. This is enhanced further through our 'Crew time' programme as well as our PSHE experience, which help shape 'GREAT' learners and 'GREAT' citizens ready to make a positive and lasting impression on their communities and the world beyond.

RESPONSIBILITY through commitment and respect

Our learners are constantly encouraged to commit to their personal and academic development and take responsibility for their learning. We believe that by 'Working Hard and Being Kind' learners can prove that anything is possible. Our CREW programme, delivered through traditional tutor activity, provides extensive opportunity to develop the character and scholarly traits that support academic and personal success. Through our CREW time, our curriculum provides opportunity for deep, personal reflection through 'circle up time' where learners' responsibilities to themselves, their CREW members and their Academy are reviewed regularly alongside their commitment to excellence. We craft our pastoral curriculum to ensure that learners evaluate their progress through our 'Attitude to Learning' programme which is celebrated regularly through our Academy rewards systems and full Crew meetings (Assemblies)

Equally, we invest in the ongoing professional development of our staff who continually challenge learners through the curriculum they construct. Our expert subject specialists remain continually committed to professional growth and pay constant attention to educational research and best practice to inform their professional understanding when planning intelligent curricular. Learning is co-constructed so that the collective responsibility of designing engaging, inspiring and challenging curricular is shared equally across the highly effective teams in place across the Academy.

EXCELLENCE through curiosity

We believe that through an intelligently structured and carefully sequenced curriculum, learners are inspired to seek out new knowledge and make connections with what they already know. We also want our learners to develop inquisitive minds and encourage them to ask deep and meaningful questions about the concepts and topics that they study and the knowledge they are learning. Our curriculum is specifically and intelligently sequenced so that learners gain a depth of understanding about 'what' they are learning as well as 'why' they are learning the concepts and knowledge that they study. We plan carefully for learners to develop their curiosity through demanding and intelligently planned activity, providing opportunity to think widely and deeply whilst discussing and debating their preferred pathway through the learning experience.

Through our curriculum, learners are exposed to 'big questions' or 'enquiries' and are challenged to think more deeply about the concepts they study. Our subject specialists expertly sequence learning episodes so that the exploration of learning and the struggle to learn new knowledge is just as important as the application of learnt knowledge to new and wide-ranging concepts. We believe there is a significant worth and indeed an intellectual beauty in grappling with the struggles of learning knowledge and constantly encourage learners to think harder than they have ever thought before so that knowledge sticks in the long-term memory.

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Furthermore, our curriculum offers the opportunity for learners to explore a plethora of ways in which knowledge is learnt and applied. We provide opportunity to discuss thought, reach conclusions through discussion and debate and present arguments across the curriculum. We plan carefully and intelligently to ensure that regular opportunities to speak about what is being learned and encourage a greater depth in writing as a result of the discourse that takes place across the curriculum as we believe that speaking about learning makes writing about learning much richer and deeper.

Consequently, we place great importance on the development of vocabulary, specifically subject specific vocabulary and will often develop learners' understanding of words through the use of stories based on the origins of the vocabulary being studied (Etymology). We also expect our learners to read widely alongside our Drop Everything and Read Programme (DEAR) which forms part of our literacy strategy and our subject experts are deliberate and thoughtful in their careful selection of literature that learners experience across the curriculum ensuring that the texts studied are culturally rich and specifically demanding.

ASPIRATION through challenge

Whilst our curriculum is based on the demands of the National Curriculum, we challenge our highly enabled subject experts to design learning which transports learners to a world of awe and wonder through a carefully sequenced learning journey. We challenge our staff to inspire learners through the magic of their subject specialism so that all learners feel inspired and indeed aspire to use the knowledge they learn and the cultural capital they develop to make a positive and significant impact on their global community for generations to come.

Our curriculum, whilst challenging, is also responsive. We expect work to be demanding but understand that learning should be checked regularly so that constant review leads to responsive teaching. Where learning has not stuck in long term memory, teachers ensure that knowledge is revisited and reinforced before moving to the next phase of learning so that learning is deepened and secured in order for it to be applied to future activity along the learning journey. Where learners need additional support, this is intelligently scaffolded (where appropriate) so that our philosophical approach to learning where we 'teach to the top' continues to be strengthened as part of our curriculum design.

Our independent learning (homework) strategy strengthens the level of challenge offered through the taught curriculum and encourages learners to undertake challenging tasks which are often 'above the learners' pay grade'. Higher education articles, social media and wider academic and intellectual readings are often provided alongside carefully thought out 'Knowledge Organisers' so that learner is linked and strengthens the connections that learners make between what they have been learning and why they are learning it.

Our subject experts carefully select and identify key knowledge and high level, subject specific vocabulary as part of their intelligent curriculum design which in turn, informs the level of challenge offered through Independent Learning.

We expect our learners to remain committed to the demands and challenges of our ambitious curriculum and expect that most learners will study an EBAC Curriculum ([Click here for more information](#)) and aspire to attend a Russell Group University or a high level apprenticeship as they transition beyond through the Academy and beyond.

TENACITY through determination

Our curriculum design is highly demanding and encourages learners to grapple with the intellectual struggle of securing new knowledge. Our curriculum design demands learners wrestle with difficult concepts, and we demand that all learners accept that they will always receive demanding work that encourages them to push themselves and their thinking to limits that they never thought possible.

We encourage learners to recognise that learning can often be hard and that the struggle of remembering more so that they know more is hugely beneficial to their learning journey. We celebrate difficult and challenging situations and expect learners to demonstrate a determined approach to the discovery of new and wide-ranging knowledge. A key component of our curriculum design is the opportunity to provide constant feedback, a key facet of our culture and ethos where we believe that everyone can improve not because they are not good enough but because we always want to improve as learners and as people.

We constantly reinforce, through CREW time, Full Crew Meetings (Assemblies) and regular curriculum time, our firm belief that finding problems hard and not always getting things right first time is a critical component of the learning journey and by overcoming difficulties, learning goes much deeper. Through deliberate and determined effort our learners will prove that anything is possible and will leave us at the end of their 7 year learning journey fully prepared to make a significant and lasting imprint on a global scale and as a direct result of the ambitious and aspiration curriculum experience, make a positive and lasting contribution on society and make the world in which we live, a better and brighter place.