

Birkdale High School



Birkdale
High School

Aspire - Thrive - Succeed

Curriculum Policy
October 2018



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Date of Policy: October 2018

Member of staff responsible: Headteacher

Review date: October 2019

Introduction

Birkdale High School is a learning environment at the heart of its community. We promote care and respect and expect high standards in all aspects of school life. Our aim is to meet the needs of our young people; preparing them for adult and working life in modern Britain. This moral purpose is central to the design of our curriculum offer.

The educational vision and curriculum design for Birkdale High School recognises that:

- The pace of change is increasing, hence the importance for flexibility.
- Young people have, and will have increasingly, greater access to information and learning material independently of school.
- Adulthood entails successful economic participation in society.
- 16+ year olds will still be at an early stage of learning.
- The current curriculum defined only in subject terms is not always well suited to equipping every young person with the knowledge, skills and understanding they will need for a fulfilling adult life.
- Curriculum delivery should involve a greater use of adults other than teachers. These could include support staff, graduates, artists, sports people and people from industry and business to support curriculum delivery.
- Outstanding Teaching and Learning is crucial to the delivery of an effective curriculum.

1. Curriculum Aims

The curriculum should inspire and challenge all learners and prepare them for the future. The school's aim is to develop a coherent curriculum that builds on young people's experiences in the primary phase and that helps all young people to become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens

Birkdale High School's curriculum policy aims to:

- Have students at its centre.
- Have a curriculum that is fit for purpose, offering differentiation and personalisation.
- Value vocational and academic routes equally.
- Nurture the talents of all and celebrate success.

- Value our work with Primary Schools and post-16 providers to ensure an effective transition for all students.
- Involve parents/carers and the whole school community
- Foster outstanding learning and teaching.
- Prepare all students for a successful adult and working life in a 21st century global society.
- Ensure the school meets and exceeds national standards in achievement, attainment and progression.
- Ensure students not achieving age-related expectations upon entry close the gap and catch up with their peers.
- Ensure Disadvantaged and SEN students close the attainment gap and achieve similar results to other students nationally.
- Create a learning environment that is inspiring and engaging for all students.
- Fulfil statutory requirements.

2. Curriculum Outcomes

A successful implementation of this policy will enable all students to:

- Achieve high standards and make outstanding progress against individual prior attainment.
- Use effective learning and thinking skills and become independent learners.
- Possess high quality functional skills, including key literacy, numeracy and ICT skills.
- Enjoy and be committed to learning, to 19 and beyond.
- Value their learning outside of the curriculum and relate it to the taught curriculum.

Birkdale High School's curriculum will:

- Lead to qualifications that are of worthwhile for employers and/or entry to higher education.
- Stretch and challenge all students to fulfil their potential.
- Provide equal access for all students to a range of learning experiences beyond statutory guidelines.
- Prepare students to make informed and appropriate choices at all stages of their education.
- Help students develop lively, enquiring minds, an ability to question and argue rationally and an ability to apply themselves to tasks and physical skills.
- Encourage students to use language and number effectively.
- Ensure students develop personal moral values, respect for religious values and tolerance of other races beliefs and ways of life.
- Equip students to understand the world in which they live.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher working through the Assistant Headteacher responsible for curriculum will ensure that:

- All statutory 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 students will be met. This will include how the subject will be taught and assessed.
- The amount of time provided for teaching the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the governors' annually.
- The individual needs of some students are met by implementing significant modifications to individual timetables.
- The procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements and students and their parents/carers receive regular information to show how much progress the students are making and what is required to help them improve.

- The governing body is fully involved in decision making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum.
- The governing body is advised on target setting protocols in order to make informed decisions.
- Detailed and up-to-date schemes of learning are in place throughout the curriculum.
- Schemes of work are monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.

The governing body will ensure that:

- It considers the advice of the Headteacher when approving this curriculum policy and when setting targets.
- Progress towards annual targets is monitored.
- It contributes to decision making about the curriculum.
- Swift action is taken should the school performance indicate that this policy is not effective.

Individual members of the Leadership group will ensure that they:

- Have an oversight of curriculum structure and delivery within their area of responsibility.
- Adequately challenge and support Middle Leaders so that levels of attainment and rates of progression are discussed on a regular basis and actions are taken where necessary to improve these within their Line Management areas.

Subject Leaders and Heads of Year will ensure that:

- Long term planning is in place for all courses. Such schemes of learning contain curriculum detail on: context, expectations, key skills, learning objectives, learning outcomes, learning activities, home learning, differentiation and resources.
- There is consistency in terms of curriculum delivery. Schemes of learning should be in place and be used by all staff delivering a particular course.
- Appropriate awarding bodies and courses are selected so that they best meet the learning needs of our students.
- Where necessary an appropriate combination of qualifications or alternative qualifications can be offered which best suit the needs of learners.
- Assessment is appropriate to the course and the students following particular courses. There should be consistency of approach towards assessment both within curriculum areas and across the school.
- They keep the appropriate leadership group member informed of proposed changes to curriculum delivery.
- All relevant information/data is shared with the Data and Exams Manager. This includes meeting deadlines related to exam entries etc.
- Student performance data is reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that any necessary changes in terms of curriculum delivery are planned and carried out in a timely fashion.
- They share best practice with other colleagues in terms of curriculum design and delivery.
- They oversee the professional development needs of their team with regard to curriculum planning and delivery within their area of responsibility.

Teaching staff and learning support staff will:

- Ensure that the school curriculum is implemented in accordance with this policy.
- Keep up to date with developments in their subjects.
- Have access to, and be able to interpret, data on each student to inform the design of the curriculum in order that it best meets the needs of each cohort of students.
- Share and exchange information about best practice amongst their colleagues in different schools and through external networks, resulting in a dynamic and relevant curriculum.

- Participate in high quality professional development, working with other teachers to develop their skills in understanding the learning needs of their students and how best to address those needs and engage them.
- Work in partnership with other agencies to provide an appropriate range of curriculum opportunities.

Students will:

- Be treated as partners in their learning, contributing to the design of the curriculum.
- Have their individual needs addressed, both within the school and extending beyond the classroom into the family and community through a curriculum which offers breadth, support and challenge.
- Be given additional support if they start to fall behind in their learning, helping them get back on track quickly.
- Receive co-ordinated support to enable them to make the appropriate curriculum choices at examination stage and beyond.
- Engage in the curriculum and apply themselves to their learning both in and out of the classroom.

Parents and carers will:

- Be consulted about their children's learning and in planning their future education.
- Be confident that their child is receiving a high quality education that is designed to meet their learning needs and which will equip them with the skills they need to thrive throughout their lives.
- Be informed about the curriculum on offer and understand the rationale behind it.
- Support their son's learning by ensuring excellent attendance and creating a positive learning environment at home.

4. Monitoring

The governing body will receive an annual report from the Headteacher on:

- The standards reached in each subject compared with national and local benchmarks.
- The standards achieved at the end of key stage 4 against agreed key measures, taking into account any important variations between groups of students, subjects, courses and trends over time, compared with national and local benchmarks.
- The number of students for whom the curriculum was modified and the arrangements which were made.

The governing body will receive termly report from the Headteacher on:

- For Years 7 and 8, the standards reached in each subject for every year group at each agreed tracking point, taking into account any important variations between groups of students, subjects, courses and trends over time.
- For Years 9, 10 and 11, the predicted achievement across the school at the end of key stage 4 against agreed key measures, taking into account any important variations between groups of students and trends over time, compared with national and local benchmarks.
- For Years 9, 10 and 11, the predicted achievement across the school at the end of key stage 4 in all examination subjects, taking into account any important variations between groups of students, subjects, courses and trends over time, compared with national and local benchmarks.

The governing body will review this policy at least annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

5. Curriculum Arrangements

Each year group is generally split into two bands within which the boys are set for some subjects. In May 2017, the school moved to a **2 years Foundation Stage (Years 7 and 8) and a 3 years Examinations Stage (Years 9, 10 and 11)** with students choosing their options at the end of Year 8.

The following outline is correct for the **academic year 2018-2019**, but minor variations may occur if circumstances change.

English is compulsory to GCSE level for all pupils. It is taught in mixed ability groups in Year 7 and setted groups in Year 8 for seven lessons per fortnight and eight lessons in Years 9, 10 and 11. All pupils will be preparing for an examination in English Literature as well as English Language.

Mathematics is compulsory to GCSE level for all pupils. It is taught in setted groups in Years 7-11 for seven lessons per fortnight. In addition, the top sets will take Statistics as a further GCSE subject in Year 10.

Science is compulsory to GCSE level for all pupils. It is taught in forms in Year 7 and setted groups in Years 8 to 11. The GCSE courses in separate Sciences begin for all boys during Year 9. Students in Years 10 and 11 have nine lessons of Science per fortnight, split equally into Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Students studying separate Sciences have fifteen lessons.

Art and Design is compulsory in Foundation Stage. Pupils are taught in mixed ability groups from Year 7. Pupils study this subject for three lessons per fortnight in Years 7 and 8. At examination level, it is an option, which, if chosen, has five lessons allocated per fortnight.

Computing is compulsory in Foundation Stage. From Year 7, pupils are taught in ability groups. Pupils study this subject for three lessons a fortnight. At examination level, it is an optional subject, which, if chosen, has five lessons allocated per fortnight – it is possible to take GCSE Computer Science or I-Media.

Design & Technology is compulsory in Foundation Stage. All areas of Design & Technology are taught in discrete modules of work. Pupils are taught in mixed ability groups in Years 7 and 8. Pupils study Design & Technology for four lessons per fortnight in Years 7 and 8 and are then able to opt for Catering or Product Design for GCSE study.

Drama is compulsory in Foundation Stage. Pupils are taught in mixed ability groups from Year 7. Pupils study this subject for one lesson per fortnight in Years 7 and 8. At examination level, it is an option, which, if chosen, has five lessons allocated per fortnight.

French/Spanish are compulsory in Foundation Stage. Pupils are taught in setted groups in years 7 and 8. In Years 7 and 8, pupils are taught both French and Spanish for three lessons each. In Years 9, 10 and 11, pupils can opt to do five lessons per fortnight of French or Spanish.

Geography is compulsory in Foundation Stage. Pupils are taught in mixed ability forms in Years 7-8 and study this subject for three lessons per fortnight in Years 7 and 8. At examination level, it is a very popular option, which, if chosen, has five lessons allocated per fortnight.

History is compulsory in Foundation Stage. Pupils are taught in mixed ability forms in Years 7 and 8 and study this subject for three lessons per fortnight in Years 7 and 8. At GCSE level, it is a very popular option, which, if chosen, has five lessons allocated per fortnight.

Music is compulsory in Foundation Stage. Pupils are taught in mixed ability groups from Year 7. Pupils study this subject for one lesson per fortnight in Years 7 and 8. At GCSE level, it is an option, which, if chosen, has five lessons allocated per fortnight.

Physical Education is compulsory in both Key Stages. In Years 7 and 8 pupils are taught for four lessons per fortnight. In Years 9, 10 and 11, pupils have four lessons per fortnight. Some pupils also opt to study for a GCSE in P.E. or a BTEC qualification in Sports.

Religious Education is compulsory in both Key Stages. Students have two lessons per fortnight at Foundation Stage. During Year 9, pupils begin a GCSE short course, which is

concluded in Year 11. In Year 9 they have three lessons per fortnight. In Years 10 and 11, they have two lessons per fortnight and have the option to complete the full course.

Enrichment / PSHCE

PSHCE in all year groups is delivered via the Form Tutor. There are 5 Enrichment Days and specialist targeted sessions. On Enrichment Days, delivery is mixture of form tutor, curriculum teachers as well as external speakers. It teaches students skills which will equip them for the opportunities and challenges of school as well as later life. Students are taught to make informed choices about their health and wellbeing, in particular decisions related to alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes, drugs and sexual relationships. The PSHCE curriculum aims for students to become effective learners and teaches students how they can make a full and active contribution to society. Students are introduced to key concepts of careers and employability skills. The PSHCE curriculum develops learning skills with the aim of contributing to overall learning and achievement as well as preparing students for the next phase of their education. In the Examinations Stage, students extend the skills and deepen knowledge and understanding developed in years 7 and 8. Students have 1 PSHCE dedicated lesson in Year 9 focused on their development as Outstanding Learners. The curriculum reflects the fact that students are moving towards Year 11 and examinations and are taking on greater responsibility for themselves and others. Students develop their ability to make informed choices about their health and wellbeing. The Examination Stage curriculum prepares students for situations they may encounter as young adults with topics on mental health awareness, E safety, drugs, tobacco and alcohol and sexual health. Student's literacy skills and learning skills are developed with the aim of these being applied across the curriculum. The curriculum equips students for the next stage of their education, training or employment as well as deepening their understanding of the wider world.