

# NORTH GOSFORTH ACADEMY CURRICULUM POLICY

## Aims of the curriculum

1. Provide students with an introduction to the essential knowledge they need, empowering them to be educated and positive, responsible citizens
2. Enable students to retain and apply this essential knowledge to develop their subject-specific and transferable skills
3. Build upon prior knowledge to maximise the progress made by all students
4. Inspire students to become life-long learners
5. Create a culture of high aspiration through challenging content and pride in achievement
6. Promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students, including fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith
7. Build students' character through the promotion of resilience, industry, curiosity, and sense of morality.
8. Promote knowledge and understanding of how students can keep themselves safe and healthy
9. Develop students' numeracy, literacy and oracy, including the sustained expansion of their vocabulary and their reading ability in particular
10. Prepare students effectively for the next stage in their careers

## Legislation and guidance

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 the school has 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](#).

## Roles and responsibilities

### Trustees and Academy Advisory Group

They will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold senior leaders to account for its implementation. The Academy Advisory Group will also ensure that:

- A robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets

- Proper provision is made for students with different abilities and needs, including children with special educational needs (SEN)
- All courses provided for pupils at Key Stage 4 that lead to level 2 qualifications, such as GCSEs, 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
- Students are provided with appropriate careers' education including independent, impartial careers guidance

## **Senior leaders**

Senior leaders are 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
- The amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the Local Advisory Group
- They manage requests to withdraw children from curriculum subjects, where appropriate
- The school's procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements and that middle leaders make clear plans at a departmental level to address gaps and misconceptions
- Proper provision is in place for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with SEN

## **Curriculum leaders**

Curriculum Leaders are responsible for the implementation of this policy in their departments and ensuring that:

- Effective long-term planning is undertaken and the curriculum information on the website is up to date and is sequenced effectively to maximise student progress
- Effective medium term planning is undertaken in the form of schemes of learning which support the aims of our curriculum and are in line with whole-school expectations
- Staff in their departments are aware of and follow those schemes of learning accurately
- Accurate assessment is used so that clear plans are made for gaps and misconceptions to be addressed (see DDC and scheduled 'End point' and progress meetings)

## **Curriculum structure**

At North Gosforth Academy there are 25 periods a week in the timetable, with 5 periods per day. These are 60 minute periods.

## **Key Stage 3**

The KS3 curriculum is designed to give students a challenging and stimulating beginning to their secondary education. The curriculum builds upon skills and knowledge gained in KS2 ensuring continuity and progression in transition from primary school.

All students follow the appropriate National Curriculum programmes of study. In year 7, these lessons take place in the library dedicated to the enhancement of reading skills and use Accelerated Reader to track student progress and development alongside reading aloud, phonics screenings and reciprocal reading to ensure both decoding, fluency and reading comprehension are all scrutinised and developed as effectively as possible. They also have a dedicated reading lesson in Year 7 and 8.

The subjects studied are English, including dedicated library lessons to develop- through regular practice and STAR reading tests- a love of reading, Mathematics, Science, History, Geography, Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, Computing, Music, Art, Technology (including DT, Food Technology), PE and PSHCE or 'Learning for Life'.

Students study key stage 3 subjects until the end of year 9, when they can make informed decisions to pick their options for key stage 4. They will be further supported in their holistic education and careers education through Learning for Life.

## **Key Stage 4**

In KS4, all students study for GCSEs in English Language and Literature, Mathematics, Science as well as Core PE and PSHCE.

The GCSE options offered are Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, Computer Science, Design Technology, History, Geography, Art, Photography, Food technology, Health and Fitness, Health and Social Care, Enterprise and Marketing, Ethics, Digital Technology and Media Studies.

## **KS5**

At the end of Key Stage 4, it is hoped that many students will continue into the Sixth Form at Gosforth Academy, where they are offered a broad range of A-level and alternative level 3 courses. We provide a full range of information to students on other Post 16 options, including assemblies, open days, visits to other colleges and providers and support them in selecting the best possible option for their ongoing study or employment if they choose not to remain within The Gosforth Group.

## Inclusion

Teachers set high expectations for all pupils. They 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 SEN
- Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)

Teachers plan lessons according to 'The NGA Way' and the NGA inclusive classroom so that pupils with SEN and/or disabilities can study every National Curriculum subject, wherever possible, and ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving. The SENDCO and the team co-ordinate effective support for these students. We try to ensure that these students are in lessons as often as possible and work closely with LSAs and teachers to help them achieve by making effective and considered adjustments to their practice in line with individualised support plans.

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.

## Equal Opportunities

Entry to all programmes of study is based upon their academic suitability and appropriateness, regardless of students' gender, race, disability, religion or belief. We have introduced a new aspect to our curriculum called 'Learning for Life' that develops the personal and moral education of our students by introducing them to a range of content to broaden their horizons and give them the tools they need to recognise the importance of diversity and to respect all people, regardless of belief, race, gender or disability.

Disabilities: In accordance with statutory requirements the Academy aims to make the curriculum accessible to all students as far as is reasonably practicable. The school has an Accessibility Plan which is available on the school website.

## Disapplication

In accordance with the law, the school has the right to respond to individual needs by modifying National Curriculum programmes, or disapplying the National Curriculum for the duration of Key Stage 4, to:

- allow a student to participate in extended work-related learning
- allow a student with individual strengths to emphasise a particular curriculum area; and
- allow a student making significantly less progress than other students of his/her age to consolidate his/her learning and progress across the curriculum.

Decisions about any of the above will only be made after discussion with the student and parents.

## **Religious Education**

Religious Education is available to all students.

In Year 7, 8 and 9 Religious Education is delivered through our 'Learning for Life' course. In KS4, Religious Education is delivered through modules in the 'Learning for Life' programme and on specific curriculum focus days.

## **Extra-Curricular Activities**

At North Gosforth Academy we provide a wide and varied programme of study support and cultural and sporting activities that take place outside the formal curriculum. All students are encouraged to take part in the programme (see also the Academy Charging and Remissions Policy). This is published early on in the academic year and includes a range of exciting opportunities for personal development and extra-curricular achievement. These take place both at lunchtime and after school and range from Chess Club, NEBA and NETBA reading groups, many sporting activities, to Spanish Cinema Club.

## **Independent and home learning**

The school expects home learning to be set and completed as agreed and sees this as an essential part of developing students' learning skills, organisation and self-discipline. Frog, our VLE, or Sparx Maths are generally used to do this but GCSEpod and Educake are also used extensively at Key Stage 4.

In 2023-24, it has been decided by key leaders in the school to broaden and strengthen the home learning offer for year 7,8 and 9. In year 7, students will be expected to read for 20 minutes, 3 times a week and to carry out Sparx Maths tasks as a minimum. For more on this, please see Home Learning 2023-24.

A fully staffed 'Home Learning Club' is available both before and after school in two separate venues for students who need extra support with their independent study and home learning.

**Approved by the Board of Trustees on 18 January 2024**