



A C A D E M Y  
G R E A T B A R R

# Curriculum Policy

<b>Policy Owner:</b>	James Gurung
<b>Ratified by:</b>	Local Governing Body
<b>Date:</b>	February 2025
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### **Key Stage 3 curriculum**

We believe that all students have an entitlement to powerful knowledge that sets them up to participate in *life to the full*. At Key Stage 3, students study a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them experience of a wide range of subjects. We aim to expose students to a variety of disciplines to help them discover their interests and passions.

All students study:

- ✓ Art
- ✓ Computing
- ✓ Design & Technology
- ✓ Drama
- ✓ English
- ✓ Food Preparation & Nutrition
- ✓ French
- ✓ Geography
- ✓ History
- ✓ Mathematics
- ✓ Music
- ✓ Religious Studies
- ✓ Science
- ✓ Wellbeing Active (Physical Education)
- ✓ Wellbeing Inspire (PSHE/RSE)

### **Key Stage 4 curriculum**

In Years 10 and 11, students work towards valuable GCSE and vocational qualifications that prepare them for future study and employment.

All students continue to study core subjects:

- ✓ English Language
- ✓ English Literature
- ✓ Mathematics
- ✓ Combined Science
- ✓ Wellbeing Active (Core PE)
- ✓ PSHE & RSE through the Tutor Time and assembly programme, and Values Days.

Students choose either geography or history as a humanities subject:

- ✓ Geography
- ✓ History

Students additionally choose three option subjects. The available courses vary year to year, depending on staffing availability and student interest, and may include:

- ✓ Art & Design: 3D Design
- ✓ Art & Design: Fine Art
- ✓ Art & Design: Textile Design
- ✓ Art & Design: Photography
- ✓ Biology, Chemistry, and Physics (instead of Combined Science)
- ✓ Business
- ✓ Computer Science
- ✓ Drama
- ✓ Food Preparation & Nutrition
- ✓ French
- ✓ Music
- ✓ Physical Education
- ✓ Psychology
- ✓ Religious Studies
- ✓ Sociology
- ✓ Statistics

## **Key Stage 5 curriculum**

In Years 12 and 13, students work towards advanced qualifications.

All students choose three option subjects. The available courses vary year to year, depending on staffing availability and student interest, and may include:

- ✓ Art & Design: Fine Art
- ✓ Art & Design: Photography
- ✓ Biology
- ✓ Business
- ✓ Chemistry
- ✓ Computer Science
- ✓ English Language & Literature
- ✓ Further Mathematics
- ✓ French
- ✓ Geography
- ✓ History
- ✓ Mathematics
- ✓ Physical Education
- ✓ Physics
- ✓ Politics
- ✓ Psychology
- ✓ Sociology

## **Course content**

You can find detailed information about the curriculum for each subject and year group on our website, along with details about exam boards and qualification titles.

## **Grouping**

For timetabling purposes, there are two bands in each year, 'g' and 'b', which are parallel and equivalent.

At Key Stage 3, students are taught in their Tutor Groups for most subjects. These groups are mixed ability, except for one small nurture group in each year which receives additional support. In maths, science, computing, and Wellbeing Active, students are grouped in ability sets based on their current attainment.

At Key Stage 4, students are taught in ability sets for English, maths, and science, based on their current attainment. In all other subjects, they are taught in mixed-ability classes.

At Key Stage 5, all classes are mixed ability.

In classes where we have ability grouping, sets are reviewed regularly based on students' current performance. We always aim to put students in the groups best matched to their attainment, as this is where they will make the most progress.

In all subjects, groups are determined by the Academy in the best interests of students. We always welcome a dialogue with parents/carers, but it is not possible for parents/carers to decide the classes or sets in which their child is placed.

## **Tiers of entry**

In Key Stage 4 mathematics, science, and French, students can be entered for Foundation Tier (Grades 1-5) or Higher Tier (Grades 3-9). The Academy will decide tiers of entry on an individual student basis, based on our assessment of students' performance. We will always carefully consider these decisions, and enter students for the tier that we believe, in our extensive experience, will enable the student to reach the highest grade.

We always welcome a dialogue with parents/carers, but the Academy's decision on tiers of entry is final.

## **Subject allocation**

At Key Stage 4, almost all subjects are available to everyone and do not have entry requirements. In a small number of subjects that have particular demands, such as GCSE PE and GCSE Music, we have minimum requirements. This is to make sure that all students access courses where they have the opportunity to be successful. Most courses that have entry requirements have an accessible alternative. Information on all courses is listed in our Pathways booklet.

At Key Stage 5, we have entry requirements for all subjects, which are listed in our GB6th Prospectus.

When students choose their option subjects at Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5, we will always endeavour to allocate them to their first choices where possible. However, due to constraints around timetabling, staffing, and class sizes, it may be necessary to allocate some students to one or more of their reserve choices. We may also need to withdraw courses altogether if there is low uptake, or if we have staffing changes.

When there are more applicants than places for a particular course, we will apply a fair process to decide which students receive their first choice, assigning places using a random number generator. The only exception is that where possible, we will endeavour to ensure that if a student hasn't received their first choice in one block, they are prioritised for their choices in the other blocks.

## **Right to withdrawal**

You have a right to withdraw your child from all or part of Religious Education and non-statutory elements of PSHE/RSE. This can be requested using the form found in the appendix of the PSHE and RSE Policy.

## **Finding out more**

Parents, carers, and members of the public can find out more about the curriculum by contacting the Academy. Each department is led by a Curriculum Leader who can provide specialist support and can be contacted using the 'contact us' tab on our website.