St Aldhelm's Academy
The best in everyone™
Part of United Learning

Curriculum Policy

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1. Curriculum Rationale

1.1. Aims and Principles:

The overarching aim of the United Learning Trust is to end the cycle of poverty and disadvantage: to improve the life chances for all students, their families and the community in which they live. We begin with the principle that all children are equal and there is, therefore, equality of entitlement to knowledge for each of our students.

At St Aldhelm's, we are committed to fostering a culture of innovation, courage, and excellence. We empower our students to think creatively, embrace new ideas, and solve problems with confidence. With courage, we encourage them to take risks, stand up for what is right, and persevere through challenges. Through excellence, we inspire them to strive for their highest potential in academics, character, and leadership. Together, we create a dynamic learning environment that prepares students to thrive in an ever-changing world.

At the heart of the school's teaching and learning philosophy are the Rosenshine principles, which provide a consistent, research-based framework for structuring lessons and supporting long-term knowledge retention. Teachers focus on delivering high-quality, "quality-first" instruction, with a strong emphasis on explicit instruction, scaffolding, and formative assessment.

The school's commitment to professional development is evident in its weekly whole-staff training sessions and the establishment of Teacher Learning Communities (TLCs), which encourage the sharing of best practices and the continuous refinement of teaching techniques.

1.2. Curriculum Intent

At St Aldhelm's Academy, we are committed to ensuring that every pupil, regardless of ability, special educational needs (SEN), disability, or disadvantage, has the right to achieve their full potential. Our curriculum is designed to empower pupils with a rich and diverse array of knowledge, skills, and opportunities, facilitating their progression both within school and in their future endeavours.

We firmly believe that a high-quality education is pivotal in dismantling barriers to social mobility, thereby enhancing life chances and fostering equality among our pupils compared to their peers locally and nationally. Our curriculum model is meticulously crafted to ensure a seamless progression throughout Key Stages 3 and 4, establishing solid foundations that prepare students for their subsequent educational pathways through consistent support and guidance.

Our knowledge-based, progressive curriculum model emphasises the development of key skills through the application of knowledge. We implement deliberate and planned repetition of content throughout the Key Stages to reinforce learning.

Continuous and accurate assessment practices enable us to identify and address misconceptions effectively, maximising pupil progress.

Our vision transcends mere academic achievement; it encompasses the holistic development of our pupils. We recognise that the curriculum is not solely an accumulation of knowledge but also a reflection of each pupil's life experiences.

This understanding shapes the aspirations of our young people, empowering them to exceed societal expectations.

To further our commitment to pupil empowerment, we provide extensive extracurricular opportunities, including clubs and trips, which enhance cultural capital and foster an appreciation for subjects beyond the confines of examination requirements.

Our curriculum is integral to our success. In addition to our core curriculum at Key Stage 3, we offer a diverse range of subjects that engage and inspire our pupils. At Key Stage 4, we prioritise choice, allowing students to select subjects that align with their passions and career aspirations. Our offerings range from traditional academic GCSEs to practical courses such as Child Development, Design Technology, and Hair and Beauty.

1.3. Principles

- Is broad and balanced, providing a wide range of subjects, preparing pupils for the next stage in their education or training and to be active citizens both in Britain and globally.
- Contains opportunities for the effective spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils including extra-curricular, sporting and volunteering opportunities which develop character and resilience.
- Actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- Focuses on the necessary priorities for ensuring that all pupils make excellent progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Develops pupils' spoken language, reading, writing, vocabulary and oracy as integral aspects of the teaching in every subject.
- Links to the school's system of assessment and that together they set out what pupils are expected to know, understand and do, and when.
- All pupils have an entitlement to the whole curriculum provision irrespective of their ability, disability, gender or ethnicity.

2. The Curriculum

2.1. The curriculum is:

2.1.1. Content specific:

- Every piece of key knowledge and every subject skill that students should learn in each unit of work will be specified

2.1.2. Cumulative

- Knowledge and skills from previous units are revisited explicitly and systematically and are interleaved to build retention through the curriculum and through planned assessments.
- There will be sufficient practice to embed learning.

2.1.3. Coherent

- Key knowledge and subject skills are intelligently sequenced and ordered for optimal instruction.
- Instructional sequences are consistently planned and delivered across all stages to ensure that students acquire and demonstrate a sufficient grasp of the key knowledge and subject skills relevant to their year group and stage.
- Learning Questions for every lesson are clear in terms of what substantive and disciplinary knowledge will be addressed and this knowledge will be clearly noted on medium term plans so that teachers are clear about what students should know and be able to do each lesson.

2.1.4. Challenging

- All students are challenged through learning in depth but also supported through careful scaffolding and teacher adaptations to ensure sufficient challenge for all learners.
- All students are expected to become 'experts' in the key knowledge and subject skills required by the curriculum
- The curriculum is at least as challenging as the aims established in the National Curriculum.

2.2. Curriculum outcomes

2.2.1. **Our curriculum will**:

- Lead to qualifications that hold currency for employers and for entry to further and higher education.
- Fulfil statutory requirements.
- Enable students to fulfil their potential.

- Meet the needs of young people of all abilities.
- Encourage social mobility through increased aspirations
- Provide equal access for all students to a full range of learning experiences beyond statutory guidelines.
- Prepare students to make informed and appropriate choices at the end of KS3, kS4 and beyond.
- Help students develop lively, enquiring minds, an ability to question and argue rationally and an ability to apply themselves to tasks and physical skills.
- Foster teaching styles, which will offer and encourage a variety of relevant learning opportunities.
- Help students develop personal moral values, respect for religious values and tolerance of other beliefs and ways of life.
- Help students understand the world in which they live.

3. Options and progression

Year 9 is not a GCSE year, but a foundation year used to bridge the gap from KS3 to KS4, ensuring all our students are fully prepared for the rigours of the KS4 GCSEs in Year 10.
At the end of year 9 pupils choose 3 options one of which must be History or Geography. These will form their curriculum in year 10.

4. Curriculum design

4.1. Curriculum design (per cycle 50hrs)

4.1.1. KS3 (7-8)

Subject Studied	**Hour**
English	8
Mathematics	8
Science	8
Spanish	3
Geography	3
History	3
Religeous Studies	2
Technology (inc ICT)	4
Art	2
Performing Arts	3
Physical Education	4
PSHE	2

4.1.2. KS3 (9)

Subject Studied	**Hour**
English	9
Mathematics	8
Science	8
Spanish	3
Geography	3
History	3
Religeous Studies	2
Technology (inc ICT)	4
Art/ Performing Arts	4
Physical Education	4

PSHE	2

4.1.3. KS4 (10 and 11)

Subject Studied	Hour
English	10
Mathematics	10
Science	10
Guided Option X	5
Guided Option Y	5
Guided Option Z	5
Physical Education	2

5. Subjects

Detailed information of subjects is available on the Academy website

5.1. PSHE

At SAA we recognise that Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) is essential for the development of the whole child it is for this reason we ensure all pupils study an hour of this a week which forms a rolling hour in lesson one. The PSHE curriculum has been designed so that encompasses and promotes the British Values and the 9 Protected Characteristics.

The British Values which are taught and promoted are:

- **Democracy**
  o Teaching democracy helps pupils understand that their voices matter and that everyone has the right to participate in decision-making. It encourages respect for others' opinions and prepares students to be active, responsible citizens in society.
- **Rule of Law**
  o Learning about the rule of law helps students recognise the importance of laws in keeping people safe and ensuring fairness. It also promotes an understanding of personal responsibility and the consequences of actions.
- **Tolerance of different culture and diversity**
  o Teaching tolerance encourages understanding and acceptance of diverse cultures, religions, and perspectives. It helps prevent prejudice and discrimination, promoting harmony within school and wider communities.
- **Mutal Respect**
  o Mutual respect teaches pupils to value differences in others and to treat everyone with kindness and fairness. It creates a positive school environment where all individuals feel valued and included.
- **Individual Liberty**
  o Teaching individual liberty helps pupils appreciate their rights to make choices and express themselves freely. It supports the development of confidence, independence, and self-respect while understanding the limits of freedom.

5.1.1. The 9 Protected Characteristics which are taught for the equality and inclusivity of all are:

- Age
- Belief and Non-Belief
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment

- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Gender
- Sexual Orientation

The purpose of PSHE is to help our students foster lifelong aspirations, goals and values. PSHE is a chance to give every student an equal opportunity to develop the skills and knowledge they need to flourish now and in the future. This will include helping students to deal with critical issues they face every day such as friendships, emotional wellbeing and change. The aim being that PSHE will give students the solid foundation for whatever challenging opportunities lie ahead, so they can face a world full of uncertainty with resilience and able to build respectful relationships.

6. Careers Education

Our careers curriculum is designed to enable the pupils to plan and take control of their future. In KS3, students receive information about careers through workshops, tutor time activities and calendared events during National Careers Week and National Apprenticeship Week.

The KS3 careers programme is designed to help the children prepare for their options selection in KS4 and their Post 16 choices.

Pupils in year 10 and 11 have access to an impartial career's advisor, who will interview all students formally on a one-to-one basis. Advice on the different Post 16 routes such as Vocational Courses, A Level's, T Level's and Apprenticeships are shared with all students. Mock interviews with employers take place for all year 11 students.

Careers Carousels for all students in year 9 and 10 are also used to facilitate interactions with local providers in further and higher education.

All year groups have the opportunity to develop their employability and enterprise skills through taking part in various activities and a compulsory 1-week Work Experience placement at the end of year 10.

The aim is to give pupils first-hand experience of the world of work. Each year, a range of external providers attend the Academy to present at our careers fair to talk to year groups 9-11 about employability including vocational, traineeship and apprenticeship opportunities.