

Grace Academy Coventry

Curriculum Policy

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1. Introduction

Grace Academy curriculum is a catalyst for change which will help to transform students' lives.

The key objectives are:

To raise the aspirations and the achievement levels of the students by offering them the best educational opportunities available.

To create an environment that promotes excellent learning and teaching and helps students to prepare for life and the world of work.

To provide educational opportunities and excellent facilities which are shared by parents, carers and the wider community throughout the whole year.

To provide a curriculum which enables students to enjoy learning while, at the same time, preparing them for employment, further/higher education and life-long learning.

To emphasise the development of moral purpose thereby helping students to become responsible young citizens who make valuable contributions to society.

To fully involve parents and carers in life-long learning and community education.

To extend students' understanding of the world around them, including the social, cultural and spiritual aspects of society

The basis of achieving high standards is the personalisation of learning for each student. This will take into account prior attainment, and where relevant, previous underperformance, preferred learning style and other key factors. It will set and subsequently track targets and expectations. It will ensure that each student has the opportunity to achieve or exceed the aspirational targets set for them.

We believe that all of our students should be happy and safe. They should have the limitless potential to succeed; and with a positive attitude of mutual respect, genuine integrity and amazing grace, they can strive for intentional excellence and our curriculum reflects this.

An appropriate and engaging individual curriculum pathway, based closely on the ethos of the Academy, will secure high levels of achievement.

It will be essential that the teachers and others working with students are highly skilled, trained and well-motivated. High standards at every level will be ensured through rigorous self-evaluation, supported by external validation and strengthened by collaborative work with other related Academies and local schools.

The Grace Academy sites work closely together offering mutual challenge and support. The lessons learnt in any location will be shared, as will the transformational approaches in teaching and learning.

2. Key Curriculum Features

A number of key curriculum features will drive the design and delivery of the curriculum. These will ensure that stated curriculum objectives are achieved and that the impact of the specialism is optimised.

The curriculum will:

- Provide a range of learning opportunities for students that are tailored to provide suitable programmes of study which meet individual needs. The pathways will facilitate enhancement and extension activities for some students with Key Stage 3 programme. Flexible opportunities such as our Catch-Up programmes will be provided for basic skills such as literacy, numeracy and problem solving.
- Include intensive and focused teaching for students requiring additional support.

- Provide balance and structure that reflect student needs.
- At Key Stages 4 and 5, have pathways that will include a wide range of courses including vocational courses and specialist opportunities for acceleration, and the development of learning for all students beyond the 'school day'. Offer excellent educational opportunity beginning with high quality transfer and induction procedures.
- Provide committed pastoral care and support to ensure good learning.
- Emphasise the development of moral character and appropriate values in students.
- Create an environment where excellent teaching flourishes.
- Encourage independent learning and personal enterprise.
- Ensure a breadth of opportunity to access spiritual, social or cultural development opportunities across all areas of the curriculum.
- Enable students to develop their own ideas and opinions and to be able to support them by logical argument.
- Match and link individual student's needs and aspirations with other providers and organisations.
- Provide post 16 opportunities which enables students to enjoy learning whilst preparing them for continuing (life-long) education or employment.
- Provide a learning plan based on challenging academic, specialist and vocational targets suitable for the individual student.
- Include academic targets based on achieving potential.
- Include an R.E. curriculum drawn up by the Academy and broadly based on locally approved agreed syllabuses.
- Recognise inspection by Ofsted and fully achieve the intentions of the Education Act (1988) and the Governing Board in respect of religious education and collective worship.

3. The Outline Curriculum Model

The Academy will offer a full and rich entitlement to the National Curriculum for all students. Delivery of the key curriculum features outlined above depends on several factors. These are outlined below:

3.1 Curriculum Model: KS3

Some students will require increased focus on core skills, literacy, numeracy, English, mathematics and science and these needs will be met.

Their taught programme will be enhanced through considerable opportunities for study support and extended learning outside the normal Academy hours.

The KS3 curriculum runs from Y7-Y9 and focuses on the development of the deep skills and knowledge required at KS4 and beyond. Students are entitled to subjects from the core curriculum of Maths, English and Science but also have the opportunity to experience and master subjects drawn from a wide range of specialisms. The rich and varied curriculum includes Performing Arts, Humanities, MFL, Technology and our Ethos programme (through assemblies in developing wider knowledge). In addition, our tutor-time Ethos curriculum compliments the wider curriculum in embedding key learning skills and reflection exercises into students' daily routine.

The KS3 curriculum is designed by coordinated leaders and their teams. This is managed to ensure that key topics are delivered, relevant assessments are provided and helpful feedback is given. Through this process over the three years students are in a strong position to make choices around the pathways available at KS4.

3.2 Curriculum Model: KS4

The curriculum at Key Stage 4 (KS4) will allow students to specialise. The pathway model will develop to offer a variety of subjects that enable progression. Courses will be offered either at the Academy or at partner Schools and Colleges.

The KS4 curriculum is a broad offering of a wide range of GCSE (and equivalent) subjects in order to suit individual interests, passions and life choices. As well as adhering to Statutory Progress 8 requirements, the curriculum at KS4 emphasises preparation with college/job interviews to give our young people the best start in life beyond the Academy.

All students will study English Language, English Literature, Mathematics and Science (combined or separate). In addition, their pathway choices will include the study of Humanities (Geography/History) and MFL, along with Religious Studies at GCSE level being compulsory for all students. Pathways at KS4 are managed and negotiated by the Leadership Team. Generally, the majority of students will take 9 GCSEs, unless it is in their interests to do otherwise. All students also have an hour dedicated to Physical Education. This allows students to experience a broad and balanced curriculum characterised by academic rigour and vocational opportunities.

Students will have the opportunity to choose from a broad range of subjects including Geography, History, French, Spanish, Art, Drama, Business & Enterprise (NCFE), Citizenship, Health & Fitness (NCFE) and Health & Social Care (BTEC).

In addition to the qualification on offer the curriculum at Grace is also intended to ensure students can navigate the challenges of life in a complex world with confidence and support. Therefore, an Ethos programme during assemblies, form time, Ethos Days are offered to give students support with work experience, college applications, emotional well-being, British values and mental health.

The Academy reviews the impact and efficacy of the Curriculum through the year to measure impact. Our Curriculum Model focuses on review of outcomes, priorities for the future and ensuring the Curriculum is right for the community.

3.3 RE and PHSE

The nature of the Academy, with its emphasis on Christian values, has been reflected in the allocation of time for Religious Education. RE embraces the Social, Moral, Cultural and Spiritual Dimensions and aspects of Health Education (PSHE). It also deals with behaviour, respect, courtesy, honesty, integrity, work ethic, responsibility, reliability and development of a culture of achievement as part of a planned programme including sex and relationship education. This is delivered as part of values days, tutor times and in other lessons depending upon the Academy and the specific syllabus being taught. Further details are available by contacting the Academy directly or within the Relationships and Sex Education Policy.

3.4 The Sixth Form

The Curriculum in Year 12 will be developed to meet the learning needs of the cohort and the preferences of the students. The Academy has developed accredited pathways at Level 3 to include A-level and BTEC qualifications

A strong ethos programme is embedded at Post 16 Level to ensure students are prepared on a Social, Moral and Cultural level in all aspects of Health and Well-being. Study programmes include 15 hours minimum per week of Academic study and 1 hour per week devoted to Careers and Study Skills.

All students will leave the Academy with wide ranging experiences to complement their academic achievements. Work Experience and Volunteering are essential elements in their personal development and assist in preparing them for their future at University or in the World of Work.

The Curriculum in Year 13 will follow through from Year 12 with the same balance of both academic and non-academic studies.

Pathways at KS5

Students take 3 or more subjects with 4 timetabled lessons per subject per week, and one Directed study period. The rest of the time, students are expected to remain in school for supervised study.

3 of the 5 tutor periods per week are allocated to enrichment activity covering Study Skills, Ethos and Careers.

Students have the opportunity to study for a mixture of academic and vocational courses.

Academic – A Levels

English Literature

Maths

Further Maths

Biology

Chemistry

Physics

Psychology

Art

Philosophy & Ethics

Sociology

Italian

Spanish

Vocational – BTECs

Applied Science

Business Studies

Health and Social Care

Performing Arts

Sport

3.5 Vocational and Specialist Education

Vocational pathways where appropriate to students needs will be incorporated throughout the curriculum with particular emphasis on business, information and communications technology.

The vocational courses, will lead either to extension into sixth form courses or to preparation for new employment opportunities.

Where appropriate, outside experts and professionals will be used from all areas of life to support the learning of students in specific fields including the Arts, Industry, and Design.

3.6 Sports

Sports and Leisure are important facets of the Academy's drive for encouraging a healthy lifestyle and students will benefit from the superb facilities and excellent teaching and coaching.

3.7 Approaches to Teaching and Learning

Both teaching and learning will be continually refined or, if necessary, transformed as the Academy develops. Practice will always be challenged as part of the Academy's aspiration to raising educational attainment. During their time here, we want our students to be able to read, write and use numbers effectively, so that students are equipped with meaningful knowledge, understanding and skills in order to accelerate their progress towards being a global citizen, both academically, and in terms of personal development. Rehearsal, Repetition and Retrieval (The 3 Rs) are at the heart of our learning principles in the acquisition of this knowledge and the transfer into Long-Term memory.

The teaching will:

- Be exciting, stimulating and challenging.
- Recognise that learning is a serious business which can also be fun. It will be an adventure to be enjoyed and a journey that stretches, challenges and opens young minds.
- Make learning enjoyable and effective by engaging all students and by focusing on learning how to learn. Success will always be recognised.
- Be creative and innovative, thereby helping students to learn how to problem-solve, utilise their thinking skills and develop as truly independent learners.
- Lead the way in establishing best practice. It will reflect changes in society and aim to place the Academy at the cutting-edge of developments in educational theory, technology, teaching and learning and leadership practice.
- Recognise that the leadership of teaching is a vitally important element of success. The Academy Governors and the Principal - assisted by a strong, able and dedicated team of staff, will ensure high quality teaching at all times.

The learning will ensure a wide range of approaches to ensure that different learning styles are catered for. Student learning needs will be met by skilled teachers who will apply the concepts of emotional intelligence, accelerated learning and preferred learning styles. We provide opportunities for students to take responsibility for their own learning and the learning of others, whilst at the same time developing independence and interdependence.

Our lessons are underpinned by Kagan Cooperative Talk structures, so that students have the responsibility of vocalising their ideas before transferring them to paper. Kagan's research is based on the ways to create harmonious classrooms where students are actively involved and engaged, whilst at the same time practicing real-world skills such as collaboration and listening skills. Kagan's framework allows for 'Talk for Writing', and promotes enhanced cultural capital through paired and group discussion in lessons across subjects. Students are given time to work in pairs and groups to discuss ideas, particularly before answering questions or writing a response, so that learning is less threatening and more interactive.

4. Monitoring, Assessment and Evaluations

Tracking the progress and informing all appropriate parties of our students' progress in academic, social and behavioural terms is very important to the Academy.

Students and parents will be able to receive assessment information using data from Go4Schools outlining students' grades. Parents will receive reports highlighting effort, attainment levels, behaviour and conduct and point out any issues that may have arisen.

The Academy will hold regular Parents meetings where Students and Parents have an opportunity to meet with teachers. Students will review their progress with parents and meet with teachers to discuss issues and future targets.

Students may also have further review meetings with Pastoral and Academic Leaders, Special Needs Co-ordinators, Academy Leadership Team (ALT) as appropriate.

The Academy will work in close partnership with partner primary schools so that there is a clear understanding of the needs and achievements of all students on arrival. This will enable the Academy to provide appropriate learning pathways for students in Key Stage 3 which will range from compensatory to accelerated based on Key Stage 2 data on Lower, Middle and Higher Attainment.

The Academy will offer a wide range of examinations and examination styles for students. These include regular testing and examinations in each year of the Academy, to chart progress. The Academy regularly tracks students' progress and intervenes to support students who appear to be at risk of underachieving

5. Careers Education Information & Guidance (CEAIG)

We aim to ensure our students are equipped and they can easily access a balanced careers educational programme to support their academic journey and prepare them for the world of work, higher education and apprenticeship. We aim to prepare our young people for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

We are committed to providing a comprehensible and open-minded programme for careers education, it is designed to be informative personal and relevant. We offer impartial information and guidance (CEIAG).

Our programme is designed to be progressive from Year 7 to Post 16, offer support to students in making informed choices in Year 11 and 13. The role of all within Grace Academy is to raise aspirations, challenge pigeonholes and inspire students to consider a wide range of careers.

We intend our students to:

- Develop a comprehensive understanding of the world of work and an ability to react to changing opportunities.
- Gain independent research skills to make good use of information and guidance.
- Enhance their skillset to assess achievements, plan their future pathways, make decisions, present themselves positively as well as cope with change and transition.

6. Personalised Learning

Each student will have a personalised learning pathway, including personal guidance on their courses. Likewise, all students will have access to data about their prior performance and agreed personal performance targets each year. Progress towards targets will be carefully monitored.

7. Enriching the Curriculum

The curriculum will include extension activities that take place after school using the full range of facilities. A programme of enrichment and extension activities will feature as part of each faculty's curriculum offer. Study support, Intervention support and Homework club are available throughout the academic year for all students.

Full details of the curriculum can be found on our website at www.graceacademy.org.uk.

