



EdStart Independent Specialist Education

Curriculum Policy

Persons responsible for reviewing this policy	Kevin Buchanan	Headteacher
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1. Curriculum Broad Aims

Our curriculum intends to:

- Live out the values of EdStart which are centred on re-engagement, creativity, aspiration, and engagement which typify our school ethos.
- Provide a broad and balanced education for all pupils that is coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge for skills and future learning and employment
- Enable pupils to develop knowledge, understand concepts and acquire skills, and be able to choose and apply these in relevant situations
- Support pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development
- Support pupils' physical development and responsibility for their own health, and enable them to be active
- Promote a positive attitude towards learning
- Ensure equal access to learning for all pupils, with elevated expectations for every pupil and appropriate levels of challenge and support
- Have a high academic/vocational ambition for all pupils
- Equip pupils with the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life
- Provide ambitious subject offer that supports pupils' learning and progression, and enable them to work towards achieving their goals
- Provide a broad curriculum prioritising a strong academic core of subjects, which are appropriate to previous school journey and individual pupil needs as required by our cohort.
- Develop pupils' independent learning skills and resilience, to equip them for further education and employment ensuring positive onward destinations post 16.

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy reflects the requirements of the [National Curriculum programmes of study](#), which all maintained schools in England must teach.

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](#).

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 we have 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](#).

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

The governing board will also ensure that:

- A robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets
- Enough teaching time is provided for pupils to cover the National Curriculum and other statutory requirements
- The school is complying with its funding protocols and teaching a "broad and balanced curriculum" which includes English, maths, science and (subject to providing the right to withdraw) religious education, and enough teaching time is provided for pupils to cover the requirements of the funding agreement
- Proper provision is made for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with special educational needs (SEN)
- All courses provided for pupils below the age of 19 that lead to qualifications, such as GCSEs, Vocation Qualifications, Functional Skills and Short Awards 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
- It fulfils its role in processes to disapply pupils from all or part of the National Curriculum, where appropriate, and in any subsequent appeals
- Pupils from year 8 onwards are provided with independent, impartial careers guidance, and that this is appropriately resourced

3.2 Headteacher

The headteacher is 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 and indicate how the needs of individual pupils will be met
- The amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the governing board
- Where appropriate, the individual needs of some pupils are met by permanent or temporary disapplication from all or part of the National Curriculum we do this via the Individual Learning plan and or EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan) pathways.
- They manage requests to withdraw children from curriculum subjects, where appropriate
- The school's procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements
- The governing board is fully involved in decision-making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum
- The governing board is advised on whole-school targets to make informed decisions
- Proper provision is in place for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with SEN

3.3 Other staff

Other staff will ensure that the school curriculum is implemented in accordance with this policy.

Senior Leader Strategic

Marc Thomas has the overall school standards and QA responsibility for curriculum, design, delivery, and devolution of responsibility.

Curriculum Leader

John Gorner has middle leader responsibility for curriculum sequencing, resourcing, and timetable to end of course requirements, including support of subject leaders.

Subject leaders then manage the distinct faculty teams and manage the curriculum design, via intent, implementation, and impact.

Subject Leads

Maths and Numeracy – Ciaran Boles

English – Michelle McDonagh

Biology – Stuart Howarth / Daniel Young

Sport – John Gorner

Humanities including Religious Studies, PSHE including British Values, RSE, History – Kevin Buchanan – pending appointment

Mental Health Well Being – Lee Jewitt

CEIAG – Emma Lees and Kevin Buchanan

Art -Senior Leader as per centre

These new extended leadership positions have been introduced to ensure consistency, quality first teaching and strong staff CPD and support for student outcomes. They do this by;

- Ensure that the planning, implementation/ delivery of their subjects is meticulous and reflects the aims of the school and the needs of the individual pupils.
- Inclusivity is at the heart of the planning, ensuring that a range of different assessment methods are used to promote engagement and achievement through all abilities.
- All required paperwork is kept up to date including subject plans (example Appendix 1), and/or schemes of work, lesson plans.
- Progress of pupils is recorded accurately and monitored during scheduled reviews with the faculty, centre and leadership team.

4. Organisation and Planning

Curriculum Approach

As a school we believe in a balance of thematic and creative curriculum that enables us to provide our pupils with the knowledge and skills needed to progress through Keys Stages 3 and 4, and into Further Education. We aim to provide our pupils with a solid offer in Numeracy, Reading, and Literacy that is enveloped by other subjects and areas of learning, including vocational skills opportunities. We recognise the post 16 currency for many of our pupils is based on strong learning, success and engagement routines therefore a broad GCSE offer based on milestones of success is crucial in giving them the language of their peers. Functional Skills and Short Awards are used as steppingstones to curriculum engagement and recovery. Our on-going weekly progress and assessment routines ensure students know their own targets and steps to their future goals. This is reflected within individual student progress folders which they will use to manage their own home-school- school half termly reviews.

Local Need / Specialist Cohorts

Many of our admissions are pupils with SEMH and low levels of learning. Pupils have often struggled with the traditional curriculum and therefore we aim to establish a creative and enticing timetable, that re-engages them back into learning but at the same time has valuable outcomes for them on completion. Our curriculum is based on local need and the expertise and experience of leadership, teaching and pastoral teams. There is a need within our distinct cohorts to support young people where mainstream schooling has broken down and provide them with a strong basis in core skills, wider GCSE subjects, PSHE, Physical Education, and a variety of other learning experiences including art therapy, DT and cooking. As well as these outcomes we aim to cover all areas of learning at stages through the year, so that pupils are not left behind in any part of their personal development.

Subjects are taught through a combination of small group classes, one to one learning, and 'hands on' vocational opportunities. As many of our pupils join us part way through the year, there is an emphasis and focus on teachers to embed cross curricular knowledge and learning in all areas. Thematic work allows us to maximise cross curricular opportunities, for example a English or biology theme may cross over into Sport or Pshe project and will involve ICT use for research and presentation, as well as art skills for display purposes.

Curriculum Intent

A broad and balanced curriculum is a vital component of positive lifelong learning experiences – which many of our cohort have not had previously therefore further to our aims our purpose is to enable academic success alongside creativity and inventiveness throughout the school curriculum by securing powerful knowledge, personal qualities, and key skills to support future success.

Edstart is built on and driven by our core values and we are committed to enabling all our students to become

Learners who gain deep and powerful knowledge in preparation for life; combining academic rigour, curiosity, and creative flair.

Learners who will achieve academic standards of sustained progress enabling them work alongside and gain recognition as with their mainstream peers.

Learners who will experience a rich, exciting curriculum that leaves them able to make powerful choices about their future ambitions.

Learners who are imaginative, optimistic and inventive; finding their voice to become effective communicators prepared for lifelong adaptability.

Learners who will experience creative teaching that makes learning engaging and allows them to think independently and be confident citizens.

Learners who are confident, resilient, well-rounded citizens; they understand the world's communities and are ready to discover their place in it.

Learners who will: be proud of their achievements and for the progress they make, and have these achievements celebrated and recorded.

Learners who develop positive, secure relationships so that they flourish and have a powerful sense of their own potential

Our curriculum is designed to meet the academic, personal, and wider needs of all students, providing developing opportunities both inside and outside of the classroom, and by enabling a variety of opportunities to expand on their cultural capital. It is designed to be rigorous and challenging; creative and inspiring; diverse and wide ranging; well-matched for the vibrant and eclectic range of students we teach.

Our curriculum will deliver on our aims in the following ways;

- provide academically rich and coherent learning which leads to deep subject knowledge
- have breadth and balance; which promotes character, and the personal, social, physical, spiritual, moral, and cultural development of our students
- place an emphasis on developing young people who are confident, resilient, work ready and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of adult life.
- ensure that students develop the essential skills in reading, writing, communication, and numeracy;
- foster students' creativity and develop essential skills and qualities, including independent learning skills; • inspire students to a commitment to learning which will last a lifetime;
- promote a healthy lifestyle;
- promote high standards in all learning and teaching;
- promote community cohesion and the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Curriculum Implementation

To enable them to flourish, a learner's time at EdStart is 'mapped' out as part of their induction as many students enter our provision at different stages. This journey is mapped out through the following overarching curricula which are intrinsically linked:

- The Academic Curriculum
- The Personal Development Curriculum (Edstart Lifestart)
- The Extended and Pastoral Curriculum

The Curricula Timetable Summary

Each subject area outlines its subject intent which guides them through the rationale and subject pedagogy. We believe that students study each subject to not only access courses and careers but also to develop passion and love of learning, specifically in their areas of interest. School values and Spiritual Moral Social and Cultural aspects are woven in via our teaching pedagogy, topic choice and student ownership.

Subject	Key Stage	Certification	Cross Curricular	Curricula	Timetable Periods Per Week or Cumulative Hours Per Term
Maths	KS 3 and 4	GCSE Pearson F/H Functional Skills	Numeracy and Business Studies – 2023 Biology / Sport	Academic	4 pw
English Language and Literature	KS 3 and 4	GCSE AQA Language and LIT NM Functional Skills	All Subjects inc school reading programme	Academic	4 pw
Sport	Core PE at KS3 GCSE Sport KS4	GCSE AQA AQA Healthy living Short Award	Maths PSHE Biology RSE	Academic Personal Development	3 pw
Biology	KS 3 (With elements of general science depending on stage) KS 4	GCSE AQA Biology AQA Short Awards 2023 in other sciences	Sport Maths RS	Academic	3 pw
Religious Studies	KS 3 and 4	GCSE AQA Full Course	PSHE Biology – ethics Citizenship RSE	Academic	2 pw
Business Studies	KS 4	GCSE – trial delivery 2022- 23	Alternative to RS Maths	Academic	2 pw
RSE	KS 3 and 4	AQA Short Awards	PSHE Biology Citizenship	Personal Development SMSC	1 pw
PSHE inc Citizenship, British Values, Financial Education	KS 3 and 4	AQA Short Awards Portfolio Progress File	RSE English Language Maths Business Studies	Personal Development	1 pw
IT Digital Skills inc Coding, Online Skills and Safety, World of Work	KS 3 and 4	AQA Short Awards Progress File	PSHE Revision Skills Careers	Personal Development	1 pw

Careers and World of Work Education	KS 3 and 4	AQA Short Awards Progress File World of Work Portfolio	PSHE IT	Personal Development	1 learning day per half term
Mental Health and Well Being	KS 3 and 4	AQA Short Awards Progress File School and Community Projects	PSHE Academic Resilience Pastoral Skill Sets	Personal Development	1 pw and thematic weeks
Art / cookery / DT Used as therapeutic learning and life skills development	KS 3 and 4	AQA Short Awards	PSHE Careers Well-Being	Personal Development	1 rotational sessions pw or as intervention
World of Work, Enrichment Trips, Rewards, and skills interventions	KS 3 and 4	Rewards and wider Engagement Programmes	All Subject and pastoral areas.	Personal Development Extended Curriculum	As part of wider personal development curriculum. Additional extended learning days Bespoke 1-1 interventions Personalised Work experience or vocational pathways
1-1 IAG	KS 3 and 4	National Careers Service	Via all subjects and dedicated careers input and IT resources to Careers Services. 1-1 interviews and support in conjunction with local offers and partner schools is dual rolled.	Personal Development Academic	ELE Days 1PW on PSHE rotation 1-1 interviews for EHCP students all years. 1-1 interviews and support for all year 10 summer 2 and Year 11 full year and into Term1 of post 16.

The Academic Curriculum

Each subject area outlines its subject intent which guides them through the rationale and subject pedagogy. We believe that students study each subject to not only access courses and careers but also to develop passion and love of learning, specifically in their areas of interest.

Each curriculum area builds their own subject journeys, with an understanding of the contextual elements that we need to address for our Greater Manchester children, considering our local context.

Strands of the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural (SMSC) education are explicitly threaded through the curriculum plans and Edstart Teaching styles of each subject area, alongside learning for PSHE, Mental Health, RSE, Careers and Religious Studies.

Home learning, home study and home reading are EdStart new 'homework' offer. These support the Academic Curriculum and the behaviours for learning within the Personal Development Curriculum allow our learners to develop healthy learning habits and independence

The Personal Development Curriculum:

The Personal Development Learning Journey is a progression model for building the development of our learners and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. Each student develops a progress file which they use to chair half termly reviews with mainstream school and home. We introduced this in the academic year 22-23 as a way of further developing student aspirations and ownership for learning and young adult behaviours. Academic year 2023 – 24 will see further development of the student achievement and progress files and language of expectation.

In addition to ensuring that students personal, physical, spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development are mapped throughout all curriculum areas we explicitly build this development through the Personal Progress File. One of the ways that the school enables this is through tutor time, key worker sessions and timetabled personal development slots on timetable or cascaded learning days. Key Workers work closely with their tutees and have an overview of academic progress and their personal development.

Students' progress and personal development are tracked on an individual and cohort level, to maximise their achievements, and ultimately their life chances. Centre Senior Leaders, Subject Leads and Teaching staff regularly monitor and review the performance of individuals and groups of students to 'Join the Dots' and ensure they are provided with the optimum conditions for success. We do this via centre specific student progress meetings followed by school wide Curricula meetings. Effective impact driven progress tracking, intervention processes and student support interventions ensure that the curriculum, extended learning experiences and pastoral care have a very positive impact on students' outcomes.

All staff have a role to play in delivering all aspects of the curricula. This shapes our academic, personal development and extended curriculum, enabling each group to follow a pathway appropriate to need, entry point and predicated progress points within the school that focuses on their broader development. In such a manner we are building a coherent route for character development and the development of the Edstart qualities of success,

A students' journey is mapped from Entry through the transition programme, all the way into the start of Year 11 as students secure their college placements or apprenticeship routes post GCSE results.

The first full week of a new school year is dedicated to formulating the ILPs and Progress Files which shape this journey – this is done within the context of a mental health and well-being thematic approach of a week of Extended Learning Days - Personal Development and Enrichment Curriculum.

Mentors and all teachers also play a role in securing student understanding of the Learning 'Qualities of Success', a set of key attributes that we have identified as being important to the personal development of students. The development of these characteristics allows them to be successful, and confident in their futures regardless of the challenges and changes they face. Over the course of their time at Edstart students will be provided opportunities to develop an understanding and appreciation of the key skills of optimism, empathy, motivation, creativity, curiosity, responsibility, resiliency, reflection, and practice and of how to apply them successfully.

The Enrichment Curriculum:

Our aim is to nurture and develop each student. We therefore build into our curriculum an entitlement of enriching and extension experiences to enable all children to experience enrichment. This is delivered through a variety of ways.

- Extended Learning Experiences (ELE Days): Full days where the regular timetable is collapsed to enable a range of creative and exciting learning opportunities.
- Workshops and visiting speakers to school.
- Trips and Visits that are specifically linked into the curriculum.
- Extra-curricular opportunities and activities.

Cultural capital is addressed through all areas of the school. We recognise that for students to aspire and be successful academically and in the wider areas of their lives, they need to be given rich and sustained opportunities to develop their cultural capital. This is addressed through each subject area, as we build in an entitlement to cultural capital that will:

- Be formally taught as part of the curriculum.
- Part of the weekly and termly Enrichment experiences (For example a reward trip will involve students planning the trip, supporting appropriate communication, asking world of work questions of staff at restaurant where they are having a meal, understanding the risk assessment before going go-karting etc.)
- Be delivered through cultural enrichment offer - Look, Listen, Learn and Lead activities which may unlock or extend understanding. Linked to World of Work experiences
- Be targeted. Where students may be identified for a specific intervention linked to developing the cultural or school capital to ensure they are not disadvantaged educationally or experientially. (Example Boxing, Animal Husbandry)
- Open Parent/Carer and student shared learning experiences including, Resilience, Employability, Cooking, Budgeting Workshops.

Short, medium, and long-term planning expectations

- Core curriculum sequenced plans in place
- Termly review and evaluation process
- Teacher lesson planning, recording and tracking review and moderation

What resources are available to support curriculum delivery

- **SharePoint curriculum area**
 - Curriculum plans
 - Hyperlinked document to teaching resources
 - Subject Overview and Profile
 - Teacher uploaded shared resources and reflective practice additions
 - Base Line Assessments
 - Sequenced Assessment Blocks and Mark Schemes
 - Timetable subject meetings and cross curricular focussed curriculum role modelling, inset sessions and cpd linked professional development.

5. Inclusion

Teachers set high expectations for all pupils. They will 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 will plan lessons so that pupils with SEN and/or disabilities can study every Core Curriculum subject, wherever possible, and ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving.

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.

Teaching staff and all delivery staff, are provided with a checklist / audit tool to help them ensure that their curriculum planning and environment are as inclusive as possible for SEND See Appendix

Further information can be found in our statement of equality information and objectives, and in our SEN policy and information report.

6. Monitoring Arrangements

The Proprietor and Governors monitor whether the school is complying with its policy vision and ensures it is teaching a “broad and balanced curriculum” Which includes the required subjects, through:

- Headteachers Reporting
- School Visits
- Staff Meetings
- Formal Assessment Results
- Post 16 Tracking
- Qualifications Outcomes
- ***The Senior leader QA and the Curriculum leader will monitor the mid to long term curriculum via:***
- Biweekly subject meetings
- Review of planning and resources
- Tracking of progress
- Subject visits and staff mentoring
- QA Schedule of observations, learning walks and book scrutiny
- ***The Senior Leader (Centre) of each site will monitor the daily delivery and quality of teaching in each centre via:***
- Daily engagement with all lessons and students
- Daily team briefing and adaptations as required
- Consistent role modelling of our ethos and values via behaviour management and teaching interactions,
- Monthly student progress meetings and book scrutiny
- 360 Degree Feedback (pupils, staff, parents) - Half Termly reviews
- Student led review and progress meetings.

Subject Leaders and champions will:

- Manage the SOW and Resourcing
- Communicate with all subject teachers and mentors
- Report to Curriculum leader for support and development
- Organise and support peer observation and moderation sessions

This policy will be reviewed every year by [the headteacher, QA Lead and Curriculum Leader and via Subject Leaders Meetings. At every review, the policy will be shared with the full governing board.

7. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Assessment policy
- Non-examination assessment policy
- SEN policy and information report
- CEIAG Policy
- Equality Policy

8. Concerns and Complaints

Parents who have concerns about any aspect of the curriculum should discuss these in the first instance with the Senior Leader for the centre their child attends. Further support is available from Subject Leader and Curriculum Leader if the required issue has a subject focus.

If the issue is not resolved parents are able to make an official complaint in writing to the Headteacher following the schools' complaints procedure.

An Inclusive Classroom Checklist:

This checklist is compiled with the essential elements required to provide an inclusive and supportive classroom for all learners at all levels. Remember that strategies and supports that are necessary for students with additional support needs will benefit all students in the class and must be available to all regardless of age and stage in the Centre.

Strategy	In Place?
Lesson planned with 3 levels of leaning (L/M/H)	
Differentiated work provided – for example, scaffolds, writing frames, keyword banks, stretch and challenge	
Evidence of Blooms (see wheel) in range of tasks	
Evidence of Blooms in verbal questioning.	
Evidence of Blooms in outcomes.	
Marking feedback in books is personalised, positive, meaningful and extends learning.	
Teacher file is in place and a working pack – for example contains data, assessment grades, reflection comments on SOW.	
Individual Pupil Progress (IPP) files for those you keyword.	
Dyslexia friendly slides used (Ariel or Comic Sans, increased line spacing, 12-14 font, pastel background (avoid black/white contrast). Black words and yellow backgrounds are most favourable.	
Use of coloured overlays and/or coloured paper/pens for certain students who require.	
Access arrangements being used as 'normal working practice.'	
Correct equipment available/being used for variety of learners.	
Visual supports alongside verbal instructions for all tasks.	
Visual supports do not contain too much clutter but are meaningful, can be used as a reference tool and appropriately support current learning.	
Visual timetable of day is available for student to independently refer to.	
Displays that celebrate success showing a range of learners	
Instructions are presented visually to be independently referred to by student to avoid sensory overload.	
Well organised classroom that is clutter free.	
Clear classroom rules and routines that are established.	
Well-lit and ventilated room (not too hot/cold).	

Seating plan takes consideration of needs (For example, HI,VI,Dyslexia, ASC).	
Tone, pace and volume of instructions from teacher varied.	
Students benefit from explicit instructions, re-phrase and repeated to enhance learning. Alongside not too much teacher talk.	
Awareness of possible sensory overload for some learners (in particular those with ADHD/ASC). Environment considered for example, not too noisy, no excessive glare, buzz of speakers etc.	
Help boxes (resources) available to assist students with independent learning.	
Evidence of literacy enrichment.	
Interventions offered, available and being used.	