



Headstart School Curriculum Policy

Date	September 2024
Version	V1 September 2024
Author	Assistant Headteacher - Head of Curriculum
Reviewer	Executive Headteacher
Approver	Governor Advisory Board
Date of Approval	September 2024
Review Date	September 2026



Contents

1. Curriculum aims	2
2. Legislation and guidance	4
3. Roles and responsibilities	3
4. Organisation and planning.....	4
5. Inclusion.....	6
6. Monitoring arrangements.....	6
7. Links with other policies.....	6

1. Curriculum aims

Our curriculum aims/intends to:

- › Provide a broad and balanced education for all pupils that's 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 high expectations for every pupil and appropriate levels of challenge and support
- › Have a high academic/vocational/technical ambition for all pupils
- › Equip pupils with the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life
- › Provide subject choices that support pupils' learning and progression, and enable them to work towards achieving their goals
- › Provide a broad curriculum including a range of GCSEs, BTECs and Entry Level qualifications
- › Develop pupils' independent learning skills and resilience, to equip them for further/higher education and employment

These curriculum aims are underpinned by our values:

- › Be inclusive: Our school values diversity and respect, so our curriculum fosters collaboration and ensures that all voices are represented and heard.
- › Be resilient: Our school values perseverance and adaptability, so our curriculum encourages students to overcome challenges and develop a growth mindset.
- › Be curious: Our school values curiosity and exploration, so our curriculum promotes inquiry-based learning and nurtures a love for discovery



2. Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects the requirements for Headstart to provide a broad and balanced curriculum and where appropriate is based on the requirements of the [National Curriculum programmes of study](#).

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](#).

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the executive 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
- › That the school is complying with teaching a "broad and balanced curriculum" which includes English, maths, reading and PSHE.
- › 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 and A-levels, 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
- › Pupils from year 7 onwards are provided with independent, impartial careers guidance, and that this is appropriately resourced

3.2 Executive 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
- › 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 in order 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.

4. Organisation and planning

4.1 Primary and Key Stage 3

Across our Primary provision and parts of Key Stage 3, we've designed a broad and balanced curriculum adapted from the National Curriculum. This ensures comprehensive coverage and progression in a way that captivates and engages our students. We've further refined the curriculum to meet the complex needs of our learners, with clear differentiation that supports individual learning styles and personalisation. Pupils in key stages 2 or 3 follow either Headstart's ASH or ELM curriculum depending on their stage of development.

A key focus is on what students will 'know and do,' and we use our unique school environment to enhance both learning and engagement across all Key Stages.

At Key Stage 2 and 3, students are taught National Curriculum subjects, including English, Mathematics, Science, Computing, Humanities, PSHE, Citizenship, Art and Design, Music, and Sport. These subjects align with the Programmes of Study, offering a well-rounded education.

4.2 Key Stage 4 and Post-16

Our Key Stage 4 and Post-16 curriculum builds on students' prior learning, offering both core subjects and a rich, varied options programme. The core programme includes English, Mathematics, Science, PE, Careers, PSHE, and Citizenship, taught at various levels, from Entry Level to GCSE, to meet diverse student needs.

In addition, students choose from a wide range of academic and vocational subjects. Academic options such as History, Geography, Art and Design, and English Literature are available, alongside vocational subjects like Horse Care, Equine Studies, Construction, Land-based Studies, Music, Information Technology, and Creative Media Technology. Pupils in key stage 4 and post 16 follow Headstart's OAK curriculum and in some cases the ASH curriculum. Our unique environment supports student engagement and fosters personal interests.

4.3 Curriculum Enrichment and Enhancement

Vocational Learning

Many of our students are motivated by practical, vocational experiences, so we offer a curriculum that integrates work-related learning in fields like Agriculture, Horticulture, Equine Studies, Small Animal and Pet Care, Painting and Decorating, Construction, Art and Design, Video Production, Graphic Design, Digital Photography, Catering, Woodwork, and Life Skills.

Land-Based and Equine Studies

Students have the opportunity to work outdoors and interact with nature, which can support sensory needs, provide therapeutic benefits, and teach empathy, structure, and responsibility. Activities such as horse riding, animal care, and farming offer popular, calming experiences that allow students to thrive.

Sport and Outdoor Learning

Sport plays a vital role in our weekly timetable, offering activities like badminton, table tennis, football, gymnastics, swimming, cycling and scootering. These activities promote teamwork, social interaction, and



self-esteem. Outdoor adventures such as hiking, camping, skiing, and fishing further develop resilience and leadership.

Forest School

Our Forest School provides students with an opportunity to learn in nature, fostering independence, confidence, and social skills. These experiences can also support future education pathways, including college and apprenticeships.

World of Work

A significant focus is placed on preparing students for the world of work. Through work experience and volunteering opportunities, we help students develop practical skills and transition smoothly into adulthood and independence. Transition plans are a core part of this process, ensuring students feel supported throughout.

4.4 Literacy and Numeracy

We place strong emphasis on individualised literacy and numeracy programmes. Our Speech and Language Therapist thoroughly assesses students and tailors programmes to their specific needs.

We are committed to improving reading through the 'Read Write Inc.' programme, which teaches synthetic phonics. Students develop reading, writing, and speaking skills through this structured approach. All staff are trained in its delivery, and students are regularly assessed to ensure continuous progress.

Further Developing Reading, Writing, Maths, and Oracy

For students who require additional support in reading, writing, and Maths, we offer personalised assistance. Lexia supports literacy development, and regular assessments track students' abilities in reading, writing, and spelling.

We also encourage the development of oracy skills, helping students articulate their ideas clearly. Weekly Votes for Schools lessons provide a platform for discussing topics that affect young people, covering SMSC, British Values, Prevent, Wellbeing, and the UN Rights of the Child. These discussions foster critical thinking and social awareness.

4.5 Curriculum Development and Review

We are constantly reflecting on what we teach and why. Our curriculum is reviewed regularly in departmental meetings, where we assess the impact of teaching and share innovative ideas. A member of the Senior Leadership Team oversees curriculum development and brings key points for discussion to the wider leadership team. The curriculum is a standing item at all SLT meetings.

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 different SEN and/or disabilities can study a broad and balanced curriculum, 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.

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

6. Monitoring arrangements

Governors monitor coverage of the curriculum subjects and compliance with other statutory requirements through:

- School visits
- Governor meetings
- Meeting with pupils.

The senior leadership team monitor the way their subjects are taught throughout the school by:

- Termly planning checks
- Learning walks
- Book looks
- Evaluation of assessments.

The senior leadership team also have responsibility for monitoring the way in which resources are stored and managed.

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years by Assistant Head of Curriculum. 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:

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Assessment and Feedback policy
- Non-examination assessment policy
- SEN policy and information report
- Equality information and objectives



➤ PSHE and RSE Policy.