

## Curriculum Principles and Overview

Astrea Academy Dearne is a strong, morally driven school where inclusivity underpins all that we do, truly believing that Every Child Matters. Senior Leaders are committed to ensure that the needs of all the children are being met through our curriculum offer. The curriculum offer is reviewed annually and curriculum design and evaluation has a pivotal role to play in ensuring children achieve the best possible outcomes for their future. We have embraced the new GCSE 9-1 specifications and have moved to a more demanding, yet broad and balanced curriculum. We see the curriculum as the building blocks on which good teaching and learning can take place.

We strive to ensure students leave Astrea Academy Dearne able to thrive in a modern day Britain, having the skills to allow them to be successful in their chosen career. For this to happen, students need to leave school being able to speak, read and write in fluent English and be numerate in financial literacy; able to use functional maths in most forms of employment. In our curriculum, both at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4, English and maths underpin all the other subjects. This has led to English and maths having a significant amount of curriculum time. Alongside subject knowledge and skills, we develop children's interpersonal skills such as resilience, determination and work ethos, as well as being good citizens and morally, socially and spiritually conscious.

### KS3 Curriculum

We operate a two-week timetable that covers 50 teaching periods within this time. All year groups are split into two half year blocks, both of which study exactly the same curriculum. All lessons are one hour long.

Our KS3 is a broad two year curriculum that builds on their individual starting points from primary school. Students in Y7 and Y8 have 9 lessons per fortnight of English and 9 lessons of maths.

In addition to this, all students study science, French, computing, religious education, history, geography, design and technology, music, art, drama, physical education, Spanish and preparation for adult life.

### In Year 7 and Y8, students receive the following lessons per fortnight:

English: nine lessons

Maths: nine lessons

Science: six lessons

Art, Design and Technology: four lessons

Geography: four lessons

French: three lessons

Spanish: two lessons

History: three lessons

Physical Education: three lessons

Expressive Arts (Music and Drama): two lessons

Computing: two lessons

Religious Education: two lessons

Preparation for Adult life: one lesson

### KS3 SEN provision

As we are a mainstream school, all children study the full range of subjects. However we understand that children learn at different rates, and some students need more time to master the necessary skills in order to access the curriculum. For students that we identify as needing to, we have a Y7/8 class that study the full curriculum in a specialist SEN environment. This ensures students receive a lower pupil teacher ratio in order to accelerate their progress quickly, as well as mastering key ideas in a range of different subjects. Students can then be integrated back into mainstream lessons and continue to be successful.

In addition to this, we offer a range of bespoke literacy interventions to help support students in mainstream education. Interventions offered depend on the individual needs of the student. Students work on a one to one basis with a teacher or in a very small group. This intervention takes place during lesson hours and is aimed at supporting students' whilst they are in the mainstream setting.

### KS4 Curriculum

We operate a two-week timetable that covers 50 teaching periods within this time. All year groups are split into two half year blocks, both of which study exactly the same curriculum.

Our KS4 is run over three years (years 9 to 11). This decision was not taken lightly and chosen to ensure students could study a range of different subjects, yet allow students to master skills and content thoroughly, and learn to apply this knowledge in exam situations effectively.

Over a fortnight, students study a core curriculum of core physical education and preparation for Adult Life, which covers post -16 education, religion and ethics, sex and relationship education and citizenship topics. These make up three lessons.

All students study English Literature, English Language, maths, combined science, and a humanities subject of their choice. This takes up 37 lessons out of the fortnight.

Students can then choose from: art; business; child development\*; computer science; drama; food technology; French; health & social care\*; media; music\*; psychology; photography; GCSE PE; religion and ethics; sports studies\* and triple Science.

All qualifications are fit for purpose and we follow up to date specifications. All subjects are worth one GCSE, except combined science, which is worth two GCSEs and triple science, which will see students receive GCSEs in biology, chemistry and physics.

A \* indicates that the course is a vocational course such as OCR national or BTEC. Each of these qualifications is a level two qualification, which is exactly the same as GCSEs, and is the equivalent of one GCSE.

Every year, the option choices are reviewed to ensure that the needs of each cohort are being met and we look to see if there are others that our students would benefit from and enjoy studying. From September 2019 we hope to offer Spanish and Dance\* as GCSE options.

Students are given the opportunity to study the correct range of subjects for the English Baccalaureate certificate (EBacc). This is not an extra qualification, rather a certificate to show that they have studied, and achieved good grades in certain academically-focused GCSEs.

These subjects also happen to be the ones most regularly asked for by college and university. You don't need to have studied all of these to go to university, but having your GCSE mix steered towards EBacc subjects will help keep your options open: English; maths; the sciences (including computer science); history or geography and a foreign language.

### KS4 SEN support

At KS4 students will be in mainstream lessons. However, there will be teaching assistant support in lessons for those students that need it. In addition to this we ensure exam access arrangements are in place for those that need extra support during their GCSE examinations in order for them to achieve their potential. Small intervention groups are run, but this is done on an individual need basis.

### Further Information

For further information about our curriculum offer we offer a parent GCSE Option Information evening in January, you could also see the 2018 options booklet for further details, as well as making an appointment to speak to Mrs Brough, Associate Vice Principal for Curriculum.