

## Curriculum Policy

Date last reviewed: September 2020

Next review date: September 2021

**Curriculum Statement;** Believe, Strive, Achieve

Westfield Academy is committed to providing a broad, balanced, challenging curriculum and fosters a love of learning. We match our curriculum to the abilities, interests and aspirations of our students; this gives every child the opportunity to strive for personal excellence.

### Intent

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 prioritising a strong academic core of subjects, such as those offered in the EBacc
- Develop pupils' independent learning skills and resilience, to equip them for further/higher education and employment
- Embed our message of "**Believe, Strive, Achieve**" is vital if we are to create successful, contributing citizens.

### Implementation

In order to fulfil these ideals, we currently have a two-year KS3 model and a three-year KS4 model. Our KS3 Curriculum is currently under review and in the consultation process, staff, students and parents will have an input into the final model.

### KS3

The aim of our KS3 is to prepare students to develop into successful individuals ready to meet the challenges of KS4. We have designed this on six key factors; we focus on the 'believe' and 'strive' aspect of our school statement in KS3. We have a strong pastoral program to support learning in the classroom, through this we want all learners to enjoy lessons whilst also aspiring to improve as young people. We aim to close the gaps that exist from their starting points, all learners should believe they have access to the same dreams and opportunities as their peers.

**Embedding the basics;** we have an intake on average below the national average and a significant number of EAL students from 16 different ethnic backgrounds, SEN and Pupil Premium students. We are aware that starting points are varied in relation to numeracy, reading and literacy but also their life experiences. Therefore, we understand how important it is that we embed the basics and decrease the gaps that may exist in order to give every child the same opportunities to access our curriculum and achieve success. There will be a high level of focus on literacy and numeracy, both in lessons and in our pastoral program as well as opportunities for students to increase their cultural knowledge and awareness.

**Introducing new content and skills,** we do recognise that part of KS3 is developing the subject specific language and "basics" required to succeed at KS4. Our faculty teams build the skills in year 7&8 and start to deliver the content in year 9, which forms the foundation for the work in KS4.

**Generating a love of learning,** we believe that students will only fully succeed if they enjoy what they do. We expect lessons to be interesting and engaging at KS3 and not simply a linear process of content towards. Through clubs and "drop-down" days we ensure that students get the chance to take risks, be creative and enjoy their learning. We encourage trips and events to take place in KS3 across the school to help increase all our learners understanding and experiences no matter what their starting point.

**Developing positive, safe, protective behaviours,** we believe students must be equipped to navigate the modern world they live in, safely and considerately. We do this through our pastoral program (assemblies, form time program) and PHSE program.

**Encouraging Healthy Choices,** we believe our duty is to ensure our students are educated to make the correct choices for a healthy lifestyle and a long productive life. We do this through our pastoral program (assemblies, form time program) and PHSE program. We do not allow "sugary, carbonated" drinks in the Academy and are working with our catering company to

improve the "healthy offer for students" whilst ensuring costs aren't prohibitive. Overall, we wish to create strong, study habits and skills in KS3 in preparation for KS4 and 5.

#### **Key Stage 4**

The options process currently takes place at the end of KS3 at Westfield Academy, allowing pupils nearly three years of study on their chosen examined courses. This decision is in keeping with our principles, as we believe the three-year examination course gives our teachers scope to embed depth and love of learning whilst covering the content required for assessments. We focus on the 'strive' and 'achieve' element of our message in KS4. Students enter KS4 having mastered the basics and should all be on a journey to all achieve their absolute best.

Through the options process, we meet the statutory national requirements and aim to provide a bespoke curriculum. For us, this means giving our pupils as much choice and flexibility as possible, whilst ensuring they follow examination courses that lead to positive outcomes and give them access to Post-16 opportunities at the correct level. Our options focus on the English Baccalaureate. Please see the options page for more information on the qualifications we offer on each route.

Achievement at KS4 is supported through; PHSE and Careers education including Work Experience at the end of KS4. Our focus being to ensure the students know where they are going after compulsory education ends and how they get there.

#### **Key Stage 5**

We have a broad range of inclusive options Post-16, supported by an informal partnership with Watford Boys Grammar school. Our curriculum offer includes traditional A-Levels as well as BTEC courses in ICT, Business and Health and Social Care. We also have a "Hair and Beauty" Academy and a Watford FC Football Academy.

#### **Impact**

We are very proud of the outcomes our pupils achieve as the result of our curriculum and teaching and learning. Our progress 8 measure has been positive each year since the measure has been introduced and has improved year on year.

#### **Background and Context**

This curriculum policy will be reviewed annually, and subject to change, following the options processes in KS4 and KS5.

#### **Learning Support**

A number of students have special educational needs or disabilities and are supported according to their level of need. Students with statements/educational, health and care plans receive individual support to ensure access to the whole curriculum; students on SEND Support are assisted by a structured programme of support with external specialist teachers also involved; and other students that are identified as not making progress are provided with targeted classroom support and progress is closely monitored. If evidence supports, any of these students are allocated extra time in examinations assessment as part of exam access concessions. When concerns are raised about students with a possible SEND issue, we will carry out an initial screening and review the student's performance and if an issue is identified, we will investigate this further. Student attainment on entry is well above the national average.

## English as an Additional Language

We have a large number of students for whom English is an additional language. For these students the school will identify need and assist as necessary.

## Disadvantaged students and Looked after children

We have a clear policy in place to ensure disadvantaged learners have access to the same level of education and curriculum as non-disadvantaged with a view that these students aspire to achieve to their full potential no matter what their starting point. The teacher in charge of looked after children is our Deputy Head teacher, DSP.

## The taught curriculum

### Lesson times

The school day at Westfield Academy begins at 8.15am. This is early due to the heavy traffic in the area. This start time is the most suitable for staff and students to arrive to school with the least disruption.

The school currently operates a two-weekly timetable of 50 periods. This is separated into 5 x 60-minute periods each day. The breaks / lunch for KS3 and KS4 are split;

KS3		KS4	
Registration/ Assembly	8.15 – 8.40	Registration/ Assembly	8.15 – 8.40
Period 1	8.40 – 9.40	Period 1	8.40 – 9.40
Break	9.40 – 10.00	Period 2	9.40 – 10.40
Period 2	10.00 – 11.00	Break	10.40 – 11.00
Period 3	11.00 – 12.00	Period 3	11.00 – 12.00
Lunch	12.00 – 12.40	Period 4	12.00 – 1.00
Period 4	12.40 – 1.40	Lunch	1.00 – 1.40
Period 5	1.40 – 2.40	Period 5	1.40 – 2.40

## Curriculum

The core subjects have moved to a 5- year curriculum that runs from year 7 to 11. This is broken down into a two-year KS3 (Year 7 & 8) and a three-year KS4 (Years 9, 10 & 11.) Option choices are made during the spring term of Year 8.

## Option choices

### Years 7 - 8

In Years 7 to 8 students study a broad curriculum (see table below). ICT is covered within the computing lessons and the DT carousel.

### GCSE Options Year 9-11

- Students study a core curriculum (see table below). Please see the option booklet published on our website.
- The curriculum design is reviewed and redesigned each year dependant on student choices, the needs of the students and examination reform.
- Compulsory subjects at KS4 are Maths, English, Applied Science, GCSE History or Geography, GCSE Spanish or French.

#### KS4 Options usually include;

Art & Design, Drama, Music, Design Technology, Triple Science, RE, BtEC Sport, Btec Business Studies, GCSE Business Studies, Computing, IT BtEC, GCSE Food, Hair & Beauty.

Table: Number of hourly periods per fortnight for every year group

Subject	Year Group				
	7	8	9	10	11
<b>English</b>	8	8	8	8	9
<b>Mathematics</b>	8	7	7	7	7
<b>Science</b>	6	7	8	8	9
<b>Art</b>	2	2			
<b>Computing</b>	2	2			
<b>Design and Technology</b>	2	2			
<b>Drama</b>	2	2			
<b>Geography</b>	3	3			
<b>History</b>	3	3			
<b>Languages.</b> Year 7 students study French and Spanish – then choose what to continue with, into Year 8	4	4			
<b>4 Options</b> (3 in Year 10)			4	5	5
<b>Humanities Option;</b> Geography/History				6	
<b>PSHE <sup>1</sup></b>	1	1	1	1	1
<b>Music</b>	2	2			
<b>PE</b>	5	5	5	5	4
<b>Religion, Philosophy &amp; Ethics</b>	2	2	5		
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>

#### A-Level Choices

A-Level options include all subjects available for GCSE as well as additional ones, currently: Further Mathematics, Business Studies, Economics, Sociology, Government and Politics, Media Studies and Psychology, Football Academy, Single Science. Student numbers will determine when a course is viable, and how many groups may be put on each year.

<sup>1</sup> PSHE – Personal, Social, Health Education. Taught in form groups by Form Tutors.

**Please see the Sixth Form Prospectus published on our website for the most up to date information.**

Students are mainly taught for 9 periods across the two week cycle, with a number of periods of supported study.

The enrichment and sport curricula offered in Y12 has a wide range of activities including Sports Leaders award, Duke of Edinburgh Award and the EPQ<sup>2</sup>.

### **Sex Education**

Sex education is taught explicitly through the science curriculum but also the emotional and relationship aspects of this are covered at various and suitable times within PSHE.

### **Religious Education**

Religious Education is a statutory requirement for all schools. Students will receive at least one period of Religious Education per cycle. Provision is made to establish daily collective worship in school.

The aims are as stated in the document "**Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus of Religious Education 2017-2022.**" By endorsing this syllabus governors believe that it enables all pupils to obtain a broad and balanced view of mankind and its varying religions, to develop respect for religions and moral values and tolerance of different ethnic backgrounds, religions and ways of life.

### **Careers, guidance and support**

The purpose of Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) at Westfield Academy is to offer opportunities for:

- Self-Development to help students understand themselves, develop their capabilities in managing transitions, assessing themselves and setting targets and to understand the influences on them so they make well-informed choices throughout their education and beyond. (Learning for work).
- Career Exploration to understand the concept of 'career' and its relevance to their own lives and how to investigate careers and opportunities. (Learning about work). To provide ideas for work experience / work placements (learning through work).
- Career Management where students apply the knowledge and skills they have developed to make realistic choices and adjust plans to manage successful change and transition.

It aims to offer the students a variety of ways to acquire the knowledge and skills to make informed career choices. Opportunities are identified through courses within PSHE in all years. Students in Year 11 onwards are booked an independent careers advice meeting with our Herts Youth connexions worker. (However other students can request this.) An adviser will be available to consult on a one to one basis during their Y11 Options Evenings. Year 10 students will all complete a week's Work Experience. Students will also be exposed to the potential

---

<sup>2</sup> Extended Project Qualification

range of possibilities after life at school whether it is University, Apprenticeship or a job and also to the value of work experience. For more information please see the Careers section of the website.

## **PSHE**

The school uses this subject to promote students' personal, social, emotional and economic development. It includes:

- Promote emotional wellbeing.
- Promote difference and acceptance.
- Allow students to learn about topics of a sensitive nature without fear of judgement, stigma or embarrassment.
- Help to develop the qualities and attributes needed to thrive as individuals, family members and members of both the school and wider society, including taking responsibility for their own behaviour and showing initiative.
- Provide the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to manage lives now and in the future.
- Allow all students to contribute and benefit from learning and discussions.
- Help students to support one another and themselves as they grow and learn.

## **SMSC<sup>3</sup> and British Values**

All subjects cover SMSC relevant to their context and PSHCE programme also supports this development. Enrichment opportunities, tutor time and all of the school life provides implicit and explicit opportunities to reinforce spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Students develop their self-knowledge, self-confidence and self-esteem. They learn about social and moral dilemmas as well as personal safety allowing them to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the rule of law.

They also consider aspects of citizenship and voting rights, family planning and financial responsibility giving them an understanding of the institutions and services in England which actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, support for the democratic process, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Throughout the programme students learn an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures by discussing, for example, issues of disability, racism, sexism and homophobia, taking particular account of the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Equality Act.

## **The extra curriculum**

The school organises a large array of extra-curricular experiences for the students. A full list of activities is published at the start of each academic year for the students to opt into and is available to governors.

---

<sup>3</sup> Spiritual Moral Social and Cultural Education

## **Monitoring and Review**

The Headteacher, in consultation with the staff and students, will undertake systematic monitoring and conduct regular reviews of the curriculum policy and procedures in order to evaluate them to ensure that the operation is effective, fair and consistent. The Headteacher will keep the Governing Body informed. The Governing Body will regularly review this policy and associated procedures, to ensure its continuing appropriateness and effectiveness. The outcome of the review will be communicated to all those involved, as appropriate.

### **Linked Documents:**

- SRE Policy
- CIAG guidance (Careers Information and Guidance )
- SEN Policy
- Equality and Diversity policy