

# Curriculum Policy

Date Issued:	October 2023
Review Date:	September 2024

Changes made since last review:	
Pg 3, Implementation	Charges to curriculum model from September 2023 from a 2-year KS3 to a 3-year KS3 and 2-year KS4.
Pg 4, Key Stage 4	Updates for new September 2023 curriculum model for KS4
Pg 5, Disadvantaged students	Corrected an error to “DSL” from “DSP”
Pg 5, Lesson times	Update to lesson allocations based on a 2-week timetable & dedicating PSHE as a lesson
Pg 6, Curriculum	Updated the curriculum model information for September 2023
Pg 6, GCSE Options	Inclusion of BTEC Sport as compulsory subject for KS4
Pg 7, A-Level Choices	Increased to 12 period from 9, with one lesson dedicated to independent study skills
Pg 7, Sex Education	Addition of external speaker support

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# Curriculum statement

## Vision statement

*Our vision is to develop well rounded, confident and responsible individuals who strive to achieve their full potential through a culture of high expectations.*

*We will do this by providing a welcoming, safe, and calm learning environment in which everyone is equal and all achievements are celebrated.*



Our core values of Believe | Strive | Achieve underpin this vision and form an integral part of a student's daily life at Westfield Academy. We want students to leave us not only having fulfilled their personal best in terms of academic results, but also equipped with these core values to enable them to thrive in all stages of their lives.

We are proud to educate students from all starting points and backgrounds. Our community is diverse. With this in mind, we want to inspire every child and their families to have high aspirations for themselves. We want them to believe they can access the best opportunities in life, and we understand that the key to this is giving them the best outcomes.

We are ambitious for our students; we believe the EBACC curriculum is a good benchmark for academic education and each year over 80% of our students successfully follow this pathway. Our core curriculum has a good balance between knowledge and skills. It also goes beyond basic national curriculum requirements, emphasising the importance of a creative, pupil-centred curriculum which is suited to the context of our school community.

We want students to progressively assume more responsibility for their learning as they become more proficient in a particular skill or concept. We emphasise this through the use of The Westfield Way in our daily teaching & learning practices. To ensure they build independent skills, students are supported to work independently on extended writing and reading tasks.

Our intent is that the curriculum:

- Enables high standards of academic achievement where outcomes empower students to progress to Higher Education.
- Provides a broad curriculum that is truly comprehensive and accessible to all pupils.

- Delivers opportunities for students to learn to be successful, to gain useful, transferable skills whilst also acquiring relevant knowledge.
- Expands students' perspectives through a range of spiritual, moral, social and cultural opportunities to promote their sense of moral and social responsibility.
- Ensures that all pupils are able to thrive and develop as healthy individuals and good citizens.
- Ensures that all pupils are safe and understand how to stay safe.
- Provides an appropriate range of opportunities and experiences to inspire pupils to succeed in the next stage in their education, training or employment.
- Closing the disadvantaged gap – targeted support for students with SEND.

Embedding our message of **"Believe | Strive | Achieve"** is vital if we are to create successful, contributing citizens.

<p><b>Believe</b></p>	<p><b><i>Self actualisation</i></b></p> <p>Our curriculum is ambitious and well-designed. It gives all students, particularly disadvantaged students and students with SEND, the knowledge they need to take advantage of opportunities, responsibilities and experiences after they finish school.</p> <p>Our curriculum goes beyond the National Curriculum requirements and staff have carefully selected wider content to suit the needs of our students.</p> <p>We believe students need to challenge themselves in order to believe they can achieve their full potential. 83% of students study the English Baccalaureate curriculum and our outcomes are above average year-on-year.</p> <p>The Academy does not offer disadvantaged students or students with SEND a reduced curriculum; they have access to the same ambitious curriculum. We help students with needs through increasing the SEND support provided in the classroom and the wider support provided by the pastoral teams.</p>
<p><b>Strive</b></p>	<p><b><i>Aspire to reach goals</i></b></p> <p>We want our students to strive for the absolute best outcomes and choices in life.</p> <p>We provide a curriculum which is ambitious and challenging. 83% of our students study the English Baccalaureate curriculum. We aim to wrap the curriculum around our students' needs, our options are broad, with a variety of GCSE &amp; vocational choices. It enables students to master the key knowledge and skills essential for each subject. It is well-designed, inclusive and carefully sequenced to provide all students with a rigorous foundation for future progression.</p>
<p><b>Achieve</b></p>	<p><b><i>Achieve the best outcomes</i></b></p> <p>We have designed the 'Westfield Way', a set of high classroom expectations to ensure consistency and support teachers in all stages of their career.</p> <p>Teachers have good subject knowledge. We regularly revisit internal and external training to support and ensure staff feel confident to address the curriculum needs for all students, particularly supporting disadvantaged students to make good progress towards their outcomes.</p> <p>Assessments are used to create learning check points of students' understanding to inform teaching.</p>

	<p>Students participate in personal development activities beyond the classroom such as The Duke of Edinburgh Award, trips abroad, STEM events and all departments arrange for students to complete their enrichment passport.</p> <p>Students make very good progress. Students learn what is intended in the curriculum and beyond. They produce work of high quality, they achieve well in national examinations, and are being prepared for their next stage of education, training or employment.</p>
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## Implementation

In order to fulfil these ideals, we have a three-year KS3 model and a two-year KS4 model.

### Key Stage 3

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' aspects of our Academy's statement in KS3. We have a strong pastoral programme 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 a student's starting point. We want all learners to have access to the same aspirations 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, including 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 student 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 programme, as well as opportunities for students to increase their cultural knowledge and awareness.

#### *Introducing new content & 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 Years 7, 8 and start to deliver some of 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 for exam preparation. 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 Academy, to help increase all our learners' understanding and experiences, no matter 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 programme (assemblies, form time programme) and Personal, Social, Health & Economic curriculum.

#### *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 programme (assemblies, form time programme) and Personal, Social, Health & Economic programme.

## Key Stage 4

At Westfield Academy, students achieve very good outcomes. The options process takes place at the end of Year 9. This will take place after careers week where students will have extensive discussions around choices. This decision is in keeping with our principles, as we believe the three-year 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' elements of our message in KS4. Students enter KS4 having mastered the basics and should all be on a journey to 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 Personal, Social, Health & Economic education 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 offers traditional A-Levels as well as BTEC courses in ICT, Science, Business and Health & Social Care. We also have a Watford FC Football Academy.

## Impact

We are very proud of the outcomes our students achieve as a result of our strong curriculum and consistent teaching and learning practices. Our progress 8 measure has been positive each year since the measure was 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 SEN support are assisted by a structured programme of support, with external specialist teachers also involved. 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 provision. When concerns are raised about students with a possible SEN 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.

## English as an additional language

We have a large number of students for whom English is an additional language. For these students, the Academy will identify needs 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 their full potential, no matter what their starting point. The teacher in charge of looked-after children is our Deputy Headteacher, DSL.

## 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 at school with the least disruption.

The Academy operates a two-weekly timetable of 50 periods. This is separated into 5 x 60-minute periods each day.

<b>Reg</b>	<b>8:15 - 8:40</b>
<b>P1</b>	<b>8:40 - 9:40</b>
<b>P2</b>	<b>9:40 - 10:40</b>
<b>Break</b>	<b>10:40 - 11:00</b>
<b>P3</b>	<b>11:00 - 12:00</b>
<b>P4</b>	<b>12:00 - 13:00</b>
<b>Lunch</b>	<b>13:00 - 13:50</b>
<b>P5</b>	<b>13:50 - 14:50</b>

## Curriculum

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

### Option choices

#### **Years 7 – 9**

In Years 7 to 9, students study the national curriculum along with specific topics chosen by our staff to ensure a wider breadth of knowledge (see table below). Design Technology students are on a carousel.

#### **GCSE Options Years 10 & 11**

The large majority of students study the EBACC curriculum, along with PSHE and BTEC Sport (see table below), along with a variety of GCSE option subjects. Please see the option booklet published on our website. The curriculum design is reviewed and redesigned each year, depending 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 and BTEC Sport.

### KS4 Options usually include

Art & Design, Drama, Music, Design Technology, Triple Science, RE, BTEC Sport, BTEC Business Studies, GCSE Economics, GCSE Sociology, GCSE Psychology, GCSE Business Studies, GCSE Computing, BTEC IT & GCSE Food.

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

Subject	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
English	7	7	7	8	8
Mathematics	7	7	7	8	8
Science	7	7	7	8	8
Art	2	2	2		
Computing	2	2	2		
Design & Technology	4	4	4		
Performing Arts	4	4	4		
Humanities	6	6	6		
Languages	4	4	4		
<b>4 Options</b> ( <i>including History / Geography and French / Spanish</i> )				20	20
PSHE	1	1	1	1	1
PE	4	4	4	5	5
RE	2	2	2		
<b>Totals</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 & Politics, Media Studies, Psychology, Football Academy, and Single Science. Student numbers will determine when a course is viable, and how many groups may be put on each year.

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

Students are mainly taught for 12 periods across the two-week cycle, with one lesson dedicated to independent study skills and building wider skills. They also have a number of periods of supported study.



The enrichment and sport curricula offered in Year 12 has a wide range of activities including Sports Leaders award, Duke of Edinburgh Award and the EPQ<sup>1</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 and through the support of external speakers. We also utilise the support of SFYP to give students an explicit understanding of Sex Education and the statutory aspects as part of the PSHE framework.

## 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 the Academy.

The aims are as stated in the document **"Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus of Religious Education 2017-2022"**. By endorsing this syllabus, Trustees believe that it enables all students 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 & support

The purpose of Careers Education, Information, Advice & 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.
- Careers fairs to provide students with first hand experience of career choices.
- The use of Unifrog to support students to research and access information about careers and roles through an online platform.
- Specific careers advice from a qualified careers advisor to help them with their Post-16 and longer term career goals.
- Meeting with different professionals and having access to career interactions with a number of different individuals and organisations over the course of their time at Westfield Academy.

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 connections worker. This includes all students with an EHCP who are given additional support and guidance above and beyond other students. Students in other years are supported where a need is identified before Year 11. An adviser will be available to consult on a one-to-one basis during their Year 11 Options Evenings as well as being available on results day to support. Year 10 students will all complete a week's work experience and are encouraged to find their own work experience which helps to support them with their own careers journey. Students from Year 8 will also be exposed to the range of possibilities and after life at school whether it is university, apprenticeship or a job and also to the value of work experience through a range of employer interactions, outside speakers and career based lessons. We are fully

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<sup>1</sup> Extended Project Qualification

committed to the provision of information regarding technical information in line with the Baker Clause. For more information please see the careers section of the website.

## PSHE

The Academy uses this subject to promote students' Personal, Social, Health & Economic development. PSHE is taught in KS3, KS4 and in KS5 as a discrete lesson once a cycle by the students' form tutor. The PSHE curriculum is designed to incorporate a five-year spiral curriculum where student knowledge builds on the prior learning from the previous year and develops the level of information in an age appropriate way. The curriculum is designed using the Statutory Framework to ensure compliance with PSHE and RHSE topics. This includes age appropriate relationship and sex, health and wellbeing, drugs and alcohol, financial education, the importance of physical education and diet and other topics such as:

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

PSHE is also part of the form time programme where it is used to develop areas that are outside of the Statutory Framework but vitally important for students to know such as critical thinking, anti-racism, understanding of the equalities act and aspirational achievement.

## SMSC<sup>2</sup> & British Values

All subjects cover SMSC relevant to their context and the PSHE programme also supports this development. Enrichment opportunities, tutor time and extracurricular activities and general school life provides implicit and explicit opportunities to reinforce spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. One session a week in tutor time is dedicated to Personal Development covering aspects of the co-curriculum that are relevant to students at that particular time such as Holocaust Memorial Day, Black History Month and Road Safety Week. These are adapted each year to develop an understanding of key topics but with relevance to any specific changes for that year.

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.

Through the study of PSHE students 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. Many other subjects also develop an understanding of these key areas such as History, RE, Science, Psychology, Sociology and English.

Throughout their time at Westfield Academy 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. Where possible

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<sup>2</sup> Spiritual Moral Social & Cultural Education

we engage outside speakers on areas of interest and relevance to help expand student's understanding of key issues.

## The extra curriculum

The Academy 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 Trustees.

Sporting activities generally follow the traditional sporting calendar, with Football, Netball and Basketball in the winter terms, then Cricket, Athletics and Rounders happening in the summer term. Alongside these activities we offer a wide range of activities aimed at getting students involved in Sport. These include fitness classes, gym sessions, badminton and table-tennis clubs. Staff also react to current trends in sport offering activities such as boxercise and cheerleading.

In September 2023, we started a programme of Sporting Excellence, targeting two sports initially (football & basketball) before moving to cricket in the summer term. The concept is to provide high-level external coaches to work with the students who are identified in the respective squads. These students then get an additional 90-120 minutes a week of specific training.

Extra-curricular activities around the rest of school are advertised on a termly basis. Student numbers for these are tracked centrally by the Head's PA. Activities are extensive ranging from Science, Art and Food clubs, to Drama societies, Creative Writing and Cinema clubs.

## Monitoring & review

The Deputy 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 Deputy Headteacher will keep the Trust Board informed. The Trust Board 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.

## Other useful documents

- SRE Policy
- CIAG Guidance (Careers Information & Guidance )
- SEN Policy
- Equality & Diversity Policy
- Full details of present clubs can be found at [Clubs](#)