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Tadcaster
Grammar School

Curriculum Statement

(See also the Curriculum Overview at: https://tgs.starmat.uk/curriculum-overview/)

SLT Oversight	DBN
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Curriculum Statement

Curriculum Overview

Our school vision statement challenges each student to **Be Your Best Self**

We want all students to maximise their potential through excellent academic and personal development and to be able to achieve fulfillment in their current and future lives. This will allow individuals to understand and appreciate their existing and developing role in modern Britain and the world. Our four staff values reinforce and inform this commitment:

- Students considered first;
- High expectations - no limitations;
- The best support for each student;
- The optimum curriculum experience for each student.

Our Curriculum Intent - The Strategic Aims For The Curriculum

We define the curriculum as all of the experiences offered to each student, including their academic subjects and co-curricular opportunities. It is grounded in an understanding of the knowledge, understanding, procedures and habits students need in order to take advantage of opportunities, responsibilities and experiences now and later in life.

The curriculum promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as part of the Personal Development programme and study within subjects, as well as physical development and creativity. Our curriculum encourages students to develop transferable knowledge and make connections within and between subjects. We also value learning beyond that which is recognised within the National Curriculum and seek to provide all students with opportunities for enrichment and deeper learning. The curriculum experience in each year and Key Stage has significant merit in its own right and prepares students for future learning.

Our Curriculum Intent - The Strategic Aims For The Curriculum

In line with our Teaching and Learning Policy, subject curricula are ambitious, knowledge-rich and logically sequenced. They are designed so that pupils build secure, connected knowledge over time and are increasingly able to think, communicate and act successfully within each discipline. Curriculum planning is built around the following principles:

Core (foundational) knowledge: the essential knowledge that pupils need to know and remember because it underpins later learning and enables access to increasingly complex ideas.

Disciplinary knowledge: knowledge of how each subject works: how knowledge is created, tested, interpreted, debated and communicated within the discipline.

Procedural knowledge: the methods, processes, techniques and routines pupils need to know how to carry

out accurately and with increasing fluency and independence.

Prior links: deliberate connections to relevant knowledge and learning that pupils have encountered previously, so that new learning is anchored securely to existing schema.

Future links: clear anticipation of where current learning leads next, ensuring that knowledge and procedures are sequenced towards increasingly demanding content and clearly defined curriculum endpoints.

Disciplinary vocabulary: explicit teaching, modelling, rehearsal and accurate use of Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary and academic language pupils need to read, write, speak and think successfully within each subject.

These principles support curriculum coherence from lesson to lesson, year to year and Key Stage to Key Stage. Teachers routinely actively prior knowledge, make links within and across the curriculum and check what pupils know, remember and can do. This enables teaching to respond to evidence of learning while maintaining ambitious curriculum goals.

Curriculum Access and Inclusion

We are committed to ensuring that all students, including those with SEND, are able to access an ambitious, broad and appropriately challenging curriculum. Our starting point is a strong Universal Offer: high-quality, adaptive and inclusive classroom teaching which anticipates and reduces barriers to learning while maintaining high expectations for all.

Where students require additional support to bridge identified gaps or overcome specific barriers, this is provided through our Universal+ offer. This may include targeted pre-teaching, literacy or numeracy intervention, bespoke scaffolds, structured adult-assisted practice and coordinated specialist support. For a small number of students with more complex or significant needs, our Universal++ provision may include a more personalised or alternative curriculum pathway. Such pathways are carefully planned around identified need, starting points and intended outcomes, and are regularly reviewed to maintain ambition, promote independence and secure meaningful progression towards future learning, employment and adulthood.

Alternative pathways are therefore not a lowering of expectations. They are a considered means of securing appropriate curriculum access and progression where the full mainstream curriculum, even with Universal and Universal+ support, would not best meet an individual student's needs.

Reading and Curriculum Access

We recognise that secure reading is fundamental to students' ability to access, understand and participate fully in the curriculum. All teachers support literacy within their subject, including the explicit teaching of Tier 3 disciplinary vocabulary and the reading of increasingly complex subject-specific texts.

Students' reading needs are identified and monitored, and targeted reading intervention is provided where required through our additional provision. Intervention is designed to address barriers to learning, develop fluency, comprehension and confidence, and enable students to access the full curriculum as independently

as possible. The impact of intervention is reviewed so that support can be adapted, continued or withdrawn in response to evidence of progress.

The school is committed to:

- Promoting equality of opportunity for each student;
- Assisting each student, through developing ambition, responsibility and resilience, to achieve the highest standards of work of which they are capable;
- Helping each student to develop a lively enquiring mind, the confidence to question, and the ability to debate rationally;
- Ensuring each student acquires knowledge, skills and training relevant to the world of work;
- Enabling each student to receive challenging, stimulating, worthwhile and enjoyable experiences;
- Making sure all students recognise their existing and emerging personal strengths and set ambitious goals accordingly;
- Developing an informed concern for local and global issues such as the environment, and an understanding of and respect for the values of other groups and cultures.

The intent of our curriculum is therefore to offer breadth, depth, balance, ambition and richness.

Throughout Key Stage 3 (Years 7-9) we support students and parents to make informed choices for GCSE and Vocational and Technical Qualifications (VTQ, including BTEC) ready for Key Stage 4 (Years 10 & 11) and beyond into the Sixth Form or alternative post-16 providers.

Our curriculum offer does not remain static. It is systematically reviewed and evolves in response to evidence about students' learning and outcomes, alongside their needs, expectations and aspirations.

We have active links with our partner primary schools, especially the 9 primary schools in the STAR MAT. This enables us to understand curriculum intent and implementation from EYFS to Year 6 to ensure continuity and coherence when students join us in Year 7.

Our Personal Development curriculum (PSHCE, SRE, CEIAG and specially organised events) across the 11-19 year age range in timetabled lessons and tutor time enables all students to develop the knowledge and skills to make sense of their current and future lives and aspirations. These key themes are also reinforced through the curriculum in individual subjects.

Key Stage 3 (Years 7, 8 and 9)

At KS3 our students receive a rich and varied programme within Years 7, 8 and 9. Our KS3 programme is designed to ensure that our students ultimately leave school with strong skills and knowledge across all their subjects, including the ones they choose not to study beyond Year 9.

We do not narrow the curriculum at KS3. All students will study all subjects within the National Curriculum plus RE throughout the three years. Our subject areas aim to deliver knowledge and skills which exceed the baseline set out in the National Curriculum.

We have a commitment to offer subjects, beyond the prescribed National Curriculum, which we believe have a high value for developing cultural capital including Drama, Business Studies and Economics.

All our Key Stage 3 courses have progression routes into Key Stage 4.

Key Stage 4 (Years 10 and 9)

At KS4 our curriculum is ambitious and rigorous, leading to academically strong, recognised qualifications for students leaving Year 11. Subject options are chosen towards the end of Year 9. We value GCSEs and Vocational & Technical qualifications (VTQs) equally. (See EBacc statement at the end of this document.)

All students are expected to study Mathematics, English Language and English Literature as well as Science. In Science, around half of the year group will study Separate Sciences (Biology, Chemistry and Physics) and around half will study Combined Science (worth two GCSEs, but still comprising Biology, Chemistry and Physics).

We believe that students should be given the opportunity to study subjects they have a passion for, want to take further or are simply interested in. Students are therefore given four option choices from a very wide range of GCSE and other Level 2 courses. The EBacc suite of options is encouraged and available to all, although we do not make them compulsory. Nor do we restrict option choices to try to boost our Progress 8 score; for example, students are allowed to opt for two Art and Design courses if this allows them to follow their passion.

All our Key Stage 4 courses have progression opportunities into Key Stage 5.

Key Stage 5 (Years 12 and 13)

At KS5 our curriculum suits the needs of the students following their broad education in KS3 and 4. Sixth Form courses offer both continuity and variety for all our students. Our collaboration with Sherburn High School provides an additional range of subjects.

In Year 12, most students study three subjects, however some do follow four. In addition to taught subject lessons, students have timetabled lessons for structured independent study. Students also have the opportunity to take the Level 3 Extended Project Qualification (EPQ).

Further information about the curriculum for each subject is provided in the Curriculum Overview section.

Curriculum Monitoring, Evaluation and Development

The quality and impact of the curriculum are monitored and evaluated systematically by Curriculum Team Leaders and senior leaders. We consider both what is being taught and what students know, remember, understand and can do as a result of the curriculum. Monitoring is developmental and is used to understand the authentic student experience, identify strengths and barriers, support professional growth and inform continuous improvement.

Evidence is drawn from a proportionate range of quality assurance activities, including learning walks and drop-ins, work scrutiny, student voice, assessment and achievement information, attendance where relevant, and staff feedback. Leaders consider the experience and outcomes of different groups, including students with SEND and disadvantaged students, and evaluate the accessibility and effectiveness of the Universal, Universal+ and, where applicable, Universal++ provision.

Curriculum review considers the effectiveness of sequencing and clearly defined endpoints; the security of core (foundational), disciplinary and procedural knowledge; students' understanding and use of disciplinary

vocabulary; and the extent to which prior and future links enable knowledge to build coherently over time. It also considers whether targeted interventions, including reading support, are enabling students to overcome barriers and access the intended curriculum.

Findings from monitoring inform subject development, professional learning, intervention planning and subsequent curriculum refinement. We hold ourselves accountable not simply for what we intend to teach, but for what students actually experience, learn and remember.

The English Baccalaureate Curriculum (EBacc)

The EBacc is a subset of GCSE subjects at Key Stage 4 which students can take during Years 10 & 11:

English Language and English Literature

Mathematics

Geography or History (the Humanities)

A language (we offer French and/or German)

The Governing Body at Tadcaster Grammar School has considered the importance of the EBacc subjects in relation to our curriculum intent and wider curriculum principles. The agreed position of the school in relation to the EBacc and other GCSE/VTQ subject options in Key Stage 4 is as follows:

> "Students have access to all of the EBacc subjects which is signposted through the Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance programme and the Year 9 options process;
>
> Currently all students student Mathematics, English Language and Literature, Separate Sciences or Combined Science, core PE and Personal Development (comprising RE, PSHCE;
>
> Beyond this core curriculum, students have access to 22 further option subjects. They currently choose four of these, which should be a free choice - as such we offer all students 'study options' rather than predetermined 'study pathways'."

Our Key Stage 4 curriculum has significant breadth and we regard creative subjects, vocational and technical qualifications, subjects allied to design and technology and business and economics, for example as having equal standing to the humanities and modern foreign languages.

Subjects	Y11 class of 2023	Y11 Class of 2024	Y11 Class of 2025	Y11 Class of 2026
Geography	41%	46%	40%	61%
French and/or German	36%	40%	45%	46%
History	30%	35%	32%	31%

In addition, all students are given the opportunity to develop their interests and talents in a diversity of alternative subjects. Current examples include:

GCSE Computer Science

BTEC Health and Social Care

GCSE Food Preparation & Nutrition

GCSE Art & Design (4 different pathways)

GCSE Economics

GCSE Drama

More information about the full range of KS4 subject offer is available through the school website in the Curriculum Overview section. Curriculum Overview

The current Department for Education guidance on the English Baccalaureate is available through the Department Education. DfE guidance

Examinations results and student destinations demonstrate that students achieve well with our Key Stage 4 curriculum subjects, which provide high-quality progression routes to sixth form study programmes and beyond.