



# Castleford Academy



# Curriculum Policy

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## 1. Curriculum Intent

Castleford Academy is a learning environment at the heart of our community. We promote the values of care and respect and expect high standards in all aspects of academy life.

At the academy, we carefully plan and structure a knowledge rich curriculum to ensure that it responds to the needs of every pupil regardless of their starting point.

Our intention is to ensure pupils make outstanding progress and that the curriculum removes any potential barriers to learning.

We want our pupils to leave with knowledge and skills which will not only create excellent life opportunities but will also prepare them exceptionally well for life beyond the academy.

### **At Castleford Academy, pupils will,**

- experience a broad, deep and knowledge rich curriculum;
- be literate and numerate;
- have high expectations for their behaviour and achievement;
- build their character;
- develop their cultural, social, moral, mental and physical development;
- secure foundations for progression.

### **Pupils experience a broad and deep curriculum**

Our academy curriculum helps pupils to achieve high standards and make excellent progress. At KS3, the curriculum is broad and pupils learn essential knowledge built around a 'learning journey' and 'Big Ideas' to ensure they have a deep understanding across a range of subjects. There are many opportunities built into lessons to secure the need to recall and retrieve previous learning so that knowledge is fully embedded.

Many pupils have a clear idea of subjects they like the most and the least by the middle of Year 8 and offering some choice at this stage engages students as partners in their learning and leads to improved outcomes. We therefore ask students to spend more time on 4 chosen areas of interest in Year 9. These courses are not externally examined; they aim to develop a mastery of the skills required to complete a subject in Key Stage 4. At KS4, the courses are carefully planned to ensure that content is thoroughly revisited and this undoubtedly prepares pupils for external examinations at the end of the course.

### **Pupils will be literate and numerate**

The development of pupil language and oracy is at the forefront of our curriculum as we understand how vital it is for our pupils to build confidence in communication skills not only for their time in school but also to prepare them for working life. We ensure pupils have opportunities in all subjects to discuss, challenge and build on other points of view and to develop their formality of language to ensure they can have the confidence to speak to different audiences. Numeracy skills are embedded across the curriculum. Pupils who arrive with below expected maths skills are quickly caught up through expert teaching and incisive intervention. The academy ensures that pupils are literate and numerate enabling them to flourish, thrive and access the next stage of their education, employment or training.



**Pupils will have high expectations for their behaviour and achievement**

The academy is inclusive and ambitious for all. We have high expectations of all pupils and provide opportunity for pupils to learn what is expected of them morally. Our behaviour policy ensures that pupils learn that actions have consequences and they can accept and appreciate differences between people. Whilst students gain knowledge through KS3 and KS4, we also want them to become learners who are enquiring, enthusiastic, engaged and mannerly. Pupils will develop high expectations of themselves and embed our key principles at the academy: Ready. Respect. Safe.

**Pupils will build their character**

At the academy, we are totally committed to improving the life chances and aspirations of pupils. With a focus on the 5 pillars of building character and resilience, we ensure pupils have access to a wider curriculum which provides numerous opportunities in sport, creativity, performing, world of work, volunteering and membership. An extensive enrichment programme supports the development of pupils into well rounded citizens.

**Pupils will develop their cultural, moral, social, mental and physical development**

At Castleford Academy, we pride ourselves on delivering a curriculum which has 'gold standard' SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural). SMSC is championed at the academy in order to develop pupils as a whole, not just academically, to ensure that they are fully prepared for life in modern Britain, pupils are able to envision 'The Bigger Picture' and show that learning is linked to the real world and experiences. Pupils are encouraged to take part in a range of sporting, cultural and charitable activities. Links with local and national business enrich the curriculum offer and help to contextualise learning.

**Pupils will secure foundations for progression**

It is our intention at the academy to ensure pupils have secure foundations for progression into further education and apprenticeships. From Year 7, pupils receive careers information with a clear focus on the Gatsby benchmarks and this is supported through drop-down days twice yearly and a focused careers week. Over the course of 5 years, pupils receive a rigorous and bespoke aspirations program that exposes our pupils to a huge range of voices and experiences.

**2. Curriculum Implementation**

The academy believes that a carefully planned and structured curriculum is the foundation upon which excellent learning and development is built. The curriculum is designed and implemented in such a way that it builds on prior knowledge and prepares pupils for the next stage in their education. This is complimented by the academy's '10 steps to outstanding' teaching and learning philosophy. This ensures that lessons are engaging and suitably differentiated so that pupil spend the large majority of time in lesson working independently at their level of ability.

Development of language and building knowledge are integral to curriculum planning. Subject Leaders, who are experts in their subjects, carefully construct a curriculum that promotes a deep understanding of a wide range of topics. Teachers plan learning that allows pupils to embed and recall knowledge through techniques such as interleaving of topics and spaced practice. This builds firm foundations for progression to the next level and exam success.



### KS3

At KS3 the curriculum is designed around 'Big Ideas'. This encourages pupils to focus on deeper learning to ensure real understanding of key concepts. Each big idea topic has a planned learning journey with clear statements setting out what pupils need to know, understand and do to reach their aspirational target grade. Lesson planning incorporates iReact which allows pupils to develop a range of skills which they can apply across all subject areas to help them with the challenge of the curriculum. The National curriculum content is carefully tracked to ensure that pupils have covered all areas of non-statutory KS4 subjects by the end of Year 8.

### Year 9

In Year 8, pupils choose 4 subjects to study in depth in Year 9. This is a deliberate action to engage pupils and enable pupils to really enjoy their subject and learn the depth of their subject over a three year course. The curriculum model allows students to choose 4 subjects in addition to the core Maths, English, Science, PE, computing and Life & Society lessons. These gateway courses are not externally examined but lay the foundations for KS4. In year 9, pupils are able to move between subjects within option blocks thereby ensuring that they are satisfied with their option choices at the start of KS4.

### KS4

Options are structured in such a way to allow pupils a free choice. This ensures equity of delivery, with all pupils having equal access to subjects. The options are designed to stretch and challenge pupils and to meet the demands of the local labour market. Pupils are offered a mixture of practical and academic subjects from all areas of the curriculum. Within the option subjects, the academy offers a range of different accreditation routes including academic and vocational options. This gives every pupil a broad and balanced curriculum, but still offers a flexibility to maximise the outcomes achieved by each individual. This model also maintains the widest possible choice for progression routes Post 16 as every pupil will have a greater range of subjects on which to choose future opportunities for education and training.

### 3. Curriculum Impact

At Castleford Academy, our curriculum will:

- ensure that the sequence of learning builds on previous knowledge whilst supporting future progression.
- lead to qualifications that are of worth for employers and for entry to further and higher education.
- enable all pupils to fulfil their potential.
- meet the needs of pupils of all abilities at the academy.
- allow pupils to acquire an appreciation and respect for their own and other cultures.
- prepare pupils to compete in the global economy.
- prepare pupils to make informed choices at the end of KS3, KS4 and beyond.
- help students develop lively, enquiring minds and the ability to question and argue rationally.



#### 4. Curriculum Hours

- At KS3, pupils are divided into an A and B half. Pupils are set by ability in the core subjects and are taught in streamed but more mixed ability groups in the foundation subjects.
- Group sizes are between 26-28 pupils.
- A core skills group, made up of pupils from year 7 and 8 helps to meet the additional needs of those pupils who struggle with the transition to secondary school.
- All lessons are 1 hour in length and there are 25 lessons per week.
- SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural) and FBV (Fundamental British Values) are embedded into the curriculum and delivered through all subjects.
- PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) provision is through a series of drop down days that are derived by staff and experts (as appropriate to the theme).

Subject	Periods per Week –Year 7	Periods per Week- Year 8
English	3	3
Maths	4	3
Science	3	3
Art	1	1
Computing	1	1
Drama	1	1
DT	2	2
French	3	2
Geography	1	2
History	1	2
Music	1	1
PE	2	3
RS	1	1
Literacy	1	0

- At KS4 core subjects are set by ability
- Option groups are largely mixed ability with some setting if there is more than one group in an option block.
- All lessons are 1 hour in length and there are 25 lessons per week.
- SMSC and FBV are embedded into the curriculum and delivered through all subjects.
- PSHE provision delivered through a life a society lesson in conjunction with drop down days.

Subject	Periods per week-Year 9	Periods per week- Year 10	Periods per week- Year 11
English	3	4	4
Maths	3	4	4
Science	3	5	5
Subject 1	3	3	3
Subject 2	3	3	3
Subject 3	3	3	2
Subject 4	3	2	3
PE	2	1	1
PSHE/RS	1	Taught in English/Maths	
Computing	1		



## 5. Assessment

- All pupils will be set a minimum target step that we expect them to achieve based on their KS2 SATs. Pupils are also set an aspirational target step that they are expected to strive towards.
- The academy has introduced learning journeys at KS3 across all subjects. The learning journeys are shared with parents and pupils. As a result, pupils are engaged in their learning and know which step they are working at and what they need to do to improve.
- Regular, low stakes, testing ensure that pupils embed knowledge into their long term memory.
- Pupils are assessed by a combination of peer, self and teacher assessments. Summative assessment will take place at least once per half term.
- Following each assessment, incisive intervention to fill gaps in knowledge means that pupils make rapid progress.
- Parents receive reports 3 times per year. The reports will indicate the progress that pupils have made towards their target grade and an indication of their behaviour and attitude to learning.

## 6. Curriculum Review

- Curriculum implementation will be reviewed and quality assured through line management, light touch and lesson observations.
- The curriculum delivered in each subject will reviewed annually by subject leaders to ensure the sequence of delivery allows pupils to build on their knowledge and that pupils are sufficiently stretched and challenged.
- The curriculum hours and subjects offered will be analysed by the senior leadership team and governors on an annual basis.
- The student leadership team will discuss curriculum content and delivery annually. This will be fed back to senior team and staff.
- Parents and pupils will have the opportunity to review the curriculum content and delivery through parent and pupil surveys.