

Allerton High School: Curriculum approach

Our curriculum is designed to ensure all students develop a love of learning and achieve their potential. We cater for students with very different interests and aptitudes and we aim to inspire and motivate all of them with a varied curriculum so that they can progress successfully to the next stage of their educational journey, becoming confident and resilient young people.

Breadth and Balance

Our curriculum is broad, balanced and ambitious, whilst maintaining some flexibility to meet the needs of each individual as far as resources allow. We offer a range of academic, practical and vocational courses and our extensive intervention program enables all students to access learning and get the most from the curriculum. We monitor students' progress closely and seek their feedback regularly so we can be responsive to identified student need.

Personal Development

PSE, the Coaching and Assembly Programme and Curriculum Enrichment Days (CED) are central to the delivery of our curriculum as they play a vital role in students' personal development. They incorporate the following: the promotion of British Values and SMSC, the duty to prevent terrorism, the duty to keep students healthy and safe from harm, the promotion of employability skills and the provision of independent careers advice and guidance. These programs are adapted to take account of ever changing local, national, international and political landscapes so that our young people are aware of and prepared to deal with current challenges and issues.

Values: kindness, hard work and aspiration

We are preparing young people ultimately for the world of work and therefore it is important they develop a breadth of knowledge and skills. We want our students to be kind, to work hard and to challenge themselves at all times as by doing so they should be well equipped to thrive in and beyond school. We are proud that our curriculum enables students to consistently achieve strong outcomes academically as well as helping them to become considerate, resilient young people with an understanding of different cultures.

Key Stage 3 (Years 7 to 9)

Our broad and balanced curriculum builds on what students learn in Key Stage 2, providing challenge, sparking curiosity and subsequently preparing students for the demands of the courses they will study in Key Stage 4.

In Years 7 to 9, students follow the National curriculum. They study English, Maths and Science; History, Geography, Religious Education, IT and PSE. Students study one modern foreign language from Year 7 so that they can master it more completely than dividing the time by learning a second language. A choice of language is made from Spanish, French, and Punjabi. Having additional time in one language means they become more proficient at a faster pace but they can still pick up a second language in Year 10 and study it to GCSE level if they choose. Students also study practical and creative subjects: Technology (including Food, Resistant Materials and Craft as part of a carousel), PE, Drama, Art and Music lessons. Alongside the Coaching Programme, the PSE curriculum equips our students with the knowledge and skills to live healthily, to understand a range of SMSC issues and to reflect more deeply upon our school's core values through working towards the Character Award.

Some students need a greater focus on literacy and numeracy when they arrive at Allerton. We withdraw these students from their usual classes on a rotational basis for focussed small group work on literacy and/or numeracy. We offer 1-1 handwriting workshops to some and the Accelerated Reader programme for all students in Y7 as we consider reading to be the key to success in the secondary curriculum. In Year 9 a small number of students are supported with additional literacy lessons in place of a Modern Foreign Language. Students are identified by the Year team, SEND, English and Language teams and withdrawal is done in consultation with families.

Key Stage 4 (Years 10 and 11)

Our Key Stage 4 curriculum builds on Key Stage 3 provision, enhancing students' learning skills and developing their academic resilience to prepare them for examinations and allow them to progress to an appropriate Post 16 pathway.

In Year 10, all students study English, Maths, Science, the Modern Foreign Language they've studied in Years 7 to 9 and either History or Geography. They study these subjects until the end of Year 11, along with two additional option courses. We offer a wide range of academic, creative and vocational option courses to meet the different needs and interests of all students. Some students perform better when assessed in an ongoing way whereas others do better in exams so by offering courses which are assessed in a variety of ways all students can play to their strengths. As well as the subjects we offered in Key Stage 3, there are new courses available such as Media, Sociology, Business, Psychology. Some students choose to study an additional Language or Humanity as one of their two options. All students follow a common GCSE Combined Science scheme of work until part way through Year 10. Some students will then begin separate courses in Biology, Chemistry and Physics whilst the majority complete a double GCSE Combined Science. This is determined based upon students' assessments with the priority being students studying the right course for them to succeed.

RE is delivered to all students from Year 7 to 10 and is certified at the end of Year 10. Faith is important to many of our young people and it is essential to our school ethos that all students feel their beliefs are respected and taken seriously. By offering all students accreditation, they have a positive approach to the subject and can study it to GCSE level without compromising their option choices.

In Year 10 and 11, a small number of students continue additional literacy support rather than a Modern Foreign Language as this is the key to them accessing the rest of the curriculum. In year 11 most students are involved in additional English, Maths and Science intervention on a rotational basis and a wide range of bespoke personalised intervention takes place as the need arises.

In Key Stage 4, the Coaching Program and PSE incorporate a specific focus on careers to ensure students are ready for their next step, as well as developing the areas considered in Key Stage 3.

Key Stage 5 (Years 12 and 13)

We try to ensure that our Post-16 curriculum is exciting and challenging but accessible to, and appropriate, for all of our students. It is designed to enable students to progress successfully to a range of pathways whatever their interests and aspirations.

The majority of students select 3 courses at the start of Year 12 which they study over 2 years. We offer a range of A Level courses and Vocational and Technical qualifications.

Generally students follow an academic route or a vocational route but there is the flexibility for them to study a mixture of academic and vocational qualifications, as students' interests may span both types of qualification. For example, a student wanting to pursue Physiotherapy, might want to study Cambridge Technical Sport alongside A Level Biology. A small number of students sit an AS Level at the end of the year 12.

All students can apply to study the Extended Project Qualification, usually in Year 13. This is an opportunity for students to work independently to develop extensive knowledge of an area of particular interest which may be related to their chosen course of study.

The Assembly and Coaching programme and Personal Development sessions incorporate key aspects of the Post-16 curriculum including the promotion of British Values and SMSC, the duty to prevent terrorism, keeping young people safe from harm, developing employability skills and preparation for the next step. Students are exposed to a range of different careers and pathways, and then discuss these, as well as their general progress, in 1 to 1 meetings with their coaches. Alongside this our Enhancement Programme provides a range of opportunities for students to develop leadership and other important transferable skills.

Learning Outside the Classroom

We very much recognise the importance of learning beyond the classroom and academic curriculum. Wider development plays a key role in preparing students to be global citizens as well as well-rounded, considerate and resilient individuals. We deliver a range of experiences for Years 7-13 to all students to promote their personal development beyond academic subjects and make available many others on an optional/voluntary basis, (see Personal Development Policy) to consolidate and broaden classroom lessons. All students access a rich programme of extra-curricular activities which provides opportunities to consolidate and broaden classroom learning, take part in sports and games, represent the school in teams, enjoy art, drama and music and explore individual interests.

Curriculum Enrichment events are used to broaden students' experiences or support deeper learning in one aspect of the curriculum using creative and innovative approaches including vertical grouping of students, visits, visitors and workshops provided by specialists.