



Ark John Keats Academy

Secondary Curriculum Policy

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Introduction

Our Mission and Vision

Our mission is to ensure our pupils lead a life of genuine choice and can drive their own destinies because they:

- *Have a rigorous academic curriculum which is well taught*
- *Know that kindness, effort, aspiration and tenacity lead to success*

Depth for breadth

An academic curriculum, rich in powerful knowledge, opens up opportunities for our children for the rest of their lives.

We believe all children have the right to be taught the **powerful knowledge** which will open up the world to them and open up the joy that comes from learning an **academic curriculum**. Powerful knowledge builds **cultural capital**, and a knowledge-based curriculum is the most efficient and effective way to enable our children to be knowledgeable, articulate, curious, and able to access the next stage of their development. All teachers understand that academic success is predicated on **wide reading** in all subjects, and so lessons include significant amounts of reading. Our curriculum **builds pupil memory**, because if nothing has been remembered nothing has been learnt. In all lessons pupils are tasked to **work hard** and practice applying key knowledge deliberately. As a result, our pupils achieve **exceptional outcomes** which open doors for the future.

Every adult who works at AJK believes in the limitless potential of all children. We believe that with the right support, all children can achieve all things, and therefore all children have access to the full breadth of the curriculum, including those with SEND. We develop our curriculum so that it is accessible and ambitious for all students from start to finish, always keeping our aims high and providing support and scaffolds to help children meet our ambitious expectations of them. You can read more about our approach to supporting students with SEND in our SEND Information Report which is found here: <https://arkjohnkeats.org/pages/strips/our-policies-24>

We have three overarching curriculum priorities which ensure that all of our students, regardless of their backgrounds and despite the difficulties they face, can lead a life of genuine choice and drive their own destinies:

1. **Powerful knowledge**

We know that our children deserve and can handle a rigorous academic curriculum, and that a curriculum rich with powerful knowledge will open doors for the future. We value build pupil memory and cultural capital.

2. **Reading**

We know that academic success is predicated on wide reading in all subjects. We have a rigorous approach to the teaching of reading and lessons include significant amounts of reading. Reading broadens horizons and fosters aspiration.

3. Diversity

We want our curriculum to celebrate and reflect the diverse bodies of people who have generated and evolved powerful knowledge within subject disciplines, so that students can appreciate, critique and change the world around them.

Curriculum planning guiding principles

All teachers and leaders recognise the value of curriculum and its power to transform lives and our approach to curriculum planning is guided by the following principles:

1. The curriculum is never finished. We must constantly review and revisit. The best teachers and the best schools practice curriculum planning regularly and review their plans systematically.
2. Our curriculum is rich with powerful knowledge and teachers have absolutely clarity on what students need to know in the long term and at each stage of their education. The curriculum is sequenced to build pupil memory and cultural capital.
3. In all lessons pupils are tasked to work hard and practice applying key knowledge deliberately.
4. We believe in the power of the network and align our curriculum with Ark schools. We value and demonstrate the best of network thinking in our AJK curriculum and influence the network with our expertise and insight.
5. Our curriculum is tailored to the needs of our pupils. We are intentional about closing gaps through responsive teaching and planning.

Curriculum Planning

Subject leaders ensure that curriculum planning over the long, medium and short term prepares students for success by clearly outlining the key knowledge and skills students need to demonstrate at each stage of their education, preparing them for the next phase of study and ultimately a life of genuine choice.

We have four key levers for achieving our curriculum aims.

- Intellectual preparation
- Co-planning
- Curriculum documentation
- Resources

Intellectual Preparation

Intellectual preparation is a thinking process which outlines the highest leverage actions a teacher can take before teaching a lesson. The process enables teachers to plan for rigour by:

- Explicitly naming the key knowledge and skills to be mastered in a lesson
- Anticipating the most challenging aspect of the lesson
- Planning and practicing the delivery of the whole, or parts of the lesson

Intellectual preparation happens individually and in teams before teaching an individual lesson or series of lessons.

Co-Planning

Co-planning is a collaborative process in which two or more teachers engage in intellectual preparation. In primary year group teams work together to focus on the non-core curriculum, and specialist teams co-plan the curriculum writing and maths. In secondary all subject teams have one period a week protected for co-planning which is led by the HoD or an experienced teacher. Most co-planning sessions will focus on short term planning but once a term, there is also a co-planning session dedicated to medium term planning to give teachers a clear understanding of the content and curriculum sequence over time.

Curriculum documentation

Curriculum documentation enables effective planning and intellectual preparation to take place. Great curriculum documents are simple to use and contain all of the key information a teacher needs in order to plan for progress over time and in the short term.

The following key documents are essential parts of the AJK curriculum:

- Curriculum vision statement
- Curriculum overview
- Medium term plans or schemes of work

Resources

Our teachers are supported by high quality resources, and as a result their planning is focused on intellectual preparation. For each medium term plan or scheme of work there are accompanying central lesson resources in the form of a PowerPoint or a booklet, meaning that teachers do not create their own lesson resources from scratch, but focus on how to adapt their teaching through delivery.

A great lesson resource adheres to the following principles:

- Adheres to the AJK curriculum guiding principles
- Reflects a coherent and comprehensive path through the lesson
- Is designed to be accessible to mixed ability classes

Curriculum and Setting Details

Number of lessons per week

We believe that all students deserve access to a rigorous academic curriculum and that with the right support, all children can achieve all things. It is for this reason that we do not withdraw any students from the curriculum, ensuring every child has access to the full suite of subjects up to the end of KS3. At GCSE and in Sixth Form we support students to select courses that will lead to high value qualifications, and that they will enjoy.

The tables below show an overview of the subjects offered and the number of lessons studied per week in each key stage.

Key Stage 3 and 4					
Subject	Number of lessons per week by year group:				
	7	8	9	10	11
English	5	5	5	6	6
Maths	5	5	5	6	6
Science	4	4	5	5	5
French	3	3	3	3*	3*
History	2	2	2	Students select three options subjects. Each has 3 lessons per week.	
Geography	2	2	2		
Art and Design	1	1	1		
PE	2	2	2		
Music	1	1	1		
Drama	1	1	1		
PRE	1	1	1		
Business	-	-	-		
Computing***	-	-	-		
Enrichment	1	1	1		
Character	1	1	1	5**	5**
Reading (30mins)	5	5	5	-	-

* Some students do not study French at GCSE level and are instead provided with additional Maths and English lessons. This decision is made based on individual and cohort needs.
 **KS4 character lessons are 30 minutes long and take place daily, at the same time as KS3 reading.
 *** Computing at KS3 is delivered through a range of other mechanisms, such as drop down days.

Key Stage 5 Curriculum	
In sixth form students can either study A-Levels or pursue our Professional Pathways (BTEC Extended Diploma alongside work experience opportunities, work readiness and career mentoring)	
In addition to taught lessons, students have independent study periods each week.	
A-Level Subjects 6 lessons per week per A-Level	Professional Pathways Subjects 17 lessons per week
English Literature Maths Further Maths Biology Chemistry Physics French History Geography	PRE Computer Science Music Drama Sociology Psychology Politics Economics Business Applied Science

Pupils can study a 'community language' if they are fluent in another language other than English or French.

Whilst we will endeavour to offer all subjects listed, we will only be able to run a course if there is sufficient uptake.

Grouping

Secondary

As far as possible in both KS3 and KS4 students are taught with the same group of pupils in their home room. This creates a strong sense of belonging and shared responsibility.

In KS3 students are in the same class for every subject; these classes are mixed attainment so that all students can work towards the same ambitious and broad curriculum goals before selecting their GCSEs. In Y8 and Y9 we have one class for our highest prior attaining students because the research suggests that this supports HPA students to make strong progress in maths particularly. Our teachers meet the varying academic needs of the children in their classes by providing scaffolding for those needing more support and stretch for those needing more challenge.

In KS4 students are in the same class for their core subjects: Maths, English, Science and French. These classes are streamed based on prior attainment and GCSE target grades, enabling teachers to deliver the GCSE curriculum at a pace appropriate to their students. This approach has supported our students to achieve excellent outcomes.

In KS5 students are grouped according to their subject choices, and we support students to select courses that they will both enjoy and succeed in.