

ALDER COMMUNITY
HIGH SCHOOL

Curriculum Policy

Reviewed and updated
February 2017

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1. Legal requirements of Governors

The Governing Body has a legal responsibility to prepare a policy document that outlines the curriculum framework of the school and how it meets the various requirements of the Education Act 1996 and the National Curriculum. This policy document meets all of these requirements and also makes reference to other school policies where further information on particular issues can be found.

2. Curriculum statement

Our curriculum will:

- give all students access to the programmes of study for all National Curriculum core and foundation subjects;
- lead to GCSE and BTEC qualifications and other forms of accreditation;
- allow students to develop key skills such as literacy, numeracy, ICT, problem solving and the ability to work successfully with others;
- enable students to gain knowledge, skills and experiences relevant to the world of work and life outside school;
- use appropriate assessment procedures;
- be appropriate to the needs of all students;
- employ a range of teaching and learning styles;
- provide a range of opportunities for students to participate in extra-curricular activities.

3. Aims

We hope that our curriculum will:

- encourage students to develop lively and enquiring minds;
- give students aspirations and the desire to succeed;
- encourage and allow all students to fulfil their potential;
- encourage students to pursue pathways leading to Further and Higher Education;
- encourage students to develop sound social skills, moral values and a clear sense of right and wrong;
- encourage students to respect other peoples' rights, cultures, religions and views and appreciate the need for equal opportunities for all.

4. Key features of the curriculum

Meeting the needs of all students

The school is committed to providing an appropriate curriculum for all its students. This includes those students with Special Educational Needs, be they particularly able and gifted children or those with learning difficulties.

Students with Special Educational Needs who need help to access the curriculum

Students with special educational needs are identified and assessed in line with the national SEN code of practice. They are then supported in a variety of ways ranging from withdrawal for specialist teaching or support in the Learning Support Centre (LSC) to the provision of alternative curriculum materials or support from Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) during mainstream lessons. The learning support team is led by Mrs Bibby, the SEN coordinator. Further details on Special Educational Needs can be found in the School SEN Policy document.

Intervention

Additional support is provided for any student on a need basis - identified by departments and/or alignment meetings. Further details can be found in our intervention plan.

Gifted and talented students

G+T students are identified within each subject area and G+T 'slots' are built into the school calendar in order that they may develop their talents further.

Student groupings and setting

At Key Stage 3 students are set or banded for most subjects enabling staff to target work and support effectively. Full details of how teaching groups are organised across Key Stage 3 can be found in appendix 1. Where setting or banding is used, all students will still follow common themes, as far as possible, so that movement up or down a set can take place if the need arises.

At Key Stage 4 students are set for the core subjects but tend to be taught as mixed ability groups for their option subjects. A degree of setting can take place where there are two classes for a particular option subject within the same option block. Again full details of how teaching groups are organised across the Key Stage can be found in appendix 1. Our option system is designed to meet the needs of all students by allowing them to take varying numbers of GCSE/BTEC subjects depending on their needs.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Guidance

School assemblies

Our programme of assemblies follows SMSC themes and is usually led by a member of SLT or a Progress Leader. All students attend an assembly each week. Further details of our assembly programme can be found in our policy document on Collective Worship and in the SMSC policy document.

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from assemblies and should contact the Headteacher if they have concerns or worries.

Tutorial programme

Our tutorial programme is designed to improve literacy, numeracy, discussion skills, world events knowledge, etc, with resources being provided for the tutors. In addition, each form is provided with a book reading box so as to develop literacy skills. Tutorials play an important part in encouraging students to develop sound moral and social values as well as providing them with a structured forum to express their views and to listen to the views of others. Further details of our tutorial programme can be found in our policy document on Collective Worship and within the SMSC policy.

The PHSE/Citizenship programme

PSHE and Citizenship are taught to all students as timetabled lessons. The programme is co-ordinated by Mr Eaton, CL for Social Science, who has developed a framework for each year group that covers issues such as Healthy Lifestyles, Rights and Responsibilities, Personal Finance and Sex and Drugs Education, as well as delivering the programmes of study for Citizenship.

Details of our Sex Education and Drugs Education policies can be found in the relevant documents.

Religious Education

RE is taught throughout the school in line with national guidelines and the locally agreed syllabus. At Key Stage 4 all students follow a half GCSE course in RE; details of the RE curriculum can be found in the RE handbook. In addition some students choose RE as one of their options so enabling them to gain a full GCSE in the subject.

The formal curriculum

All departments are encouraged to contribute to the spiritual, moral and social guidance of students through their schemes of work and through the examples set by staff - see SMSC policy.

The Behaviour Policy

One of the key principles of our Behaviour Policy is that all members of the school community should treat each other with respect, courtesy and consideration. Details of our code of conduct, our expectations and the various procedures we follow can be found in the Behaviour Policy.

Monitoring student progress

We have a whole school assessment, recording and reporting policy which includes a framework of key principles. All departments must address these key principles through their individual assessment policies but have the flexibility to implement the framework in a way that best suits their schemes of work.

The database that we use monitors and reports on student progress across the whole school; recording effort and behaviour across all subjects throughout both key stages and, more importantly, is used as a tracking/monitoring tool for each child. Regular alignment meetings use the gleaned information to assess various measures, eg, OTTA 3/4/5 levels progress, data regarding FSM students, etc.

Reports are issued in line with statutory requirements although all year groups have an additional interim report as well as their annual report. Similarly Parents in Year 7 have the opportunity to attend two Parental Consultation Evenings although in Years 8 to 11 this is limited to the statutory one.

Further details on assessment, recording, monitoring and reporting can be found in the school assessment framework.

ICT across the curriculum

As a school we are committed to using ICT across the curriculum to facilitate learning, to motivate students and to make lessons enjoyable. To this end we have invested heavily in our network and the associated hardware and software. In addition to our four ICT suites and the new Learning Resource Centre (LRC) we have trolleys of laptops which can be used with the wireless network and each classroom also has an interactive whiteboard. Mr O'Brien, our e-learning manager, is responsible for supporting colleagues in using ICT across the curriculum.

Enrichment

All departments are encouraged to enrich their curriculum through such things as visits, field trips, the use of guest speakers, links with industry, commerce and the local community, competitions and a range of alternative activities. With this in mind an enrichment budget is set aside each year to provide departments with additional funds to develop their schemes of work and add interest and relevance to the curriculum. In each academic year 3 days are identified whereby students engage in a variety of activities and where outside speakers are brought into school so as to vary the experiences of the students.

See appendix 4 - outlining a typical Enrichment Day

Classroom code of conduct

All students are expected to follow our simple code of conduct so that effective teaching and learning can take place. In addition, all staff members are encouraged to deal with students in a calm, friendly and non-confrontational manner, so designed to get the best out of the students. School discipline is based firmly on positive reinforcement and reward systems operate at both KS3 and KS4.

Careers

Careers Education and Guidance is co-ordinated by Mr Eaton and delivered through the school PHSE/Citizenship programme. Also we work closely with our Connexions Advisor to provide advice and guidance for students at KS4.

Key Skills including literacy and numeracy

At Alder, we recognise the importance of literacy across the whole school and, therefore, all departments teach literacy skills explicitly as part of their lessons. Departments have written their own literacy policies and have chosen to teach a number of reading strategies (skimming, scanning, questioning, close reading, etc.) and writing purposes (argue, persuade, describe, etc.) within their subjects. These skills are re-enforced through the use of display within the classroom. In addition to a learning objective, all lessons have a literacy learning objective to make students aware of the transferable literacy skills. Spelling, punctuation and grammar are marked across all subjects in accordance with the Alder Correction Code.

At Alder, we recognise that the modern world is more financial than ever before and that basic numeracy is a life skill. Therefore it is important that numeracy skills, that are learnt in maths, are re-enforced using the same methodology across other subjects. Key transferable skills (including percentages, symmetry, drawing graphs, questionnaires etc) should be taught consistently and explicitly across the curriculum where appropriate. Our numeracy policy is designed to ensure a consistent approach is used for teaching key topics across subjects.

Equal Opportunities

We are committed to providing an education for all children which gives opportunity and freedom from discrimination on the grounds of race, sex, sexual orientation, class or disability. This is reflected in departmental procedures, schemes of work and related teaching materials.

Homework

The school homework policy was updated in October 2016. The school runs a homework club in the Learning Resource Centre each evening.

Extra-curricular activities

The school provides a wide range of extra-curricular activities so that students can develop their skills and talents and strengthen their commitment to school. These include a variety of Pe, Art & Design, Music, ICT and Catering clubs, to name just a few; often run by members of the teaching staff but also include outside coaches.

In addition to the above many subjects operate revision classes both after school and during the school holidays in order to ensure the students are fully prepared for their examinations; the 'work, learn and eat' evenings at a local curry restaurant have proved very popular with the Year 11 students.

Students also have the opportunity to participate in residential trips both at home and abroad, eg, the Manor adventure trip for Year 7 students, French trip for Years 8-11, Winmarleigh Hall for Year 11 students, CERN trip for Year 11 students, to name just a few. In addition there are numerous excursions arranged so as to develop the 'whole' child, eg, visits to museums, art galleries, theatre productions, York Minster, Conwy castle, Chester Zoo, etc

All of the above are designed to give children an opportunity to experience a range of activities.

5. Monitoring the curriculum

Analysis of examination and assessment data

Clearly a key indicator of the quality of teaching and learning is how well students do in their KS3 Teacher Assessments and external examinations, and the subsequent analyses in RAISEonline reports which compare our performance to that of other schools. In addition to this, a wealth of information is available, from the LEA and other sources, which allows us to compare how particular groups of students have performed and how individual subjects have performed against each other and against the same subject in other schools. A summary of all this information is used as the basis for an initial discussion with staff and the LEA and then a more detailed analysis by SLT and Curriculum Leaders as part of our programme of departmental monitoring and self evaluation. This information is also presented to Governors for discussion and comment.

Lesson observation/Learning Walks

All staff members are observed by their team leader as part of the Appraisal process and detailed feedback is provided. Although the focus of the observation centres around the targets identified for that particular member of staff, detailed comment is made on all aspects of the lesson from preparation and planning to behaviour management and classroom organisation. In addition all staff members have a number of short observations by SLT as part of our departmental monitoring procedures. Longer whole lesson observations can be made if requested or where concerns arise. Copies of the proformas used for Performance Management and the longer whole lesson observation can be found in appendix 3.

Sampling of student work

Student work from across the age range is looked at on a regular basis. Linked members of SLT collect in samples of work from individual departments to view, and each half term work for particular students from across the curriculum will be sampled so that staff can compare the work that students do in their subject with that completed in others.

Monitoring of staff planners and record books

Staff planners and record books are collected in periodically by Curriculum Leaders and linked members of SLT to monitor that agreed procedures are being followed.

Curriculum Leaders

The Curriculum Leader is the guardian of standards within their department and will continually monitor the work of staff both formally and informally throughout the year. In addition to some of the procedures outlined above it is hoped that the Curriculum Leader has engendered a feeling of mutual trust and support within the team that will allow a degree of collaborative work and team teaching to take place. Similarly, in line with the key principles outlined in our assessment framework, members of each department will have opportunities to standardise and moderate each other's work. Curriculum Leaders will also meet regularly with their linked member of SLT to discuss any issues relating to the work of the department.

Schemes of Work and Improvement Plans

Linked members of SLT work closely with their departments and provide support and guidance when necessary on developing schemes of work and when completing the annual improvement plan.

Curriculum 2016 - 2017

We operate a 52 period two week timetable, with Friday having 6 teaching periods rather than 5 as operates on the other 4 days. This allows Science and English to have extra teaching periods at KS4 without having to reduce teaching time in other areas. Obviously this impacts on KS3 whereby extra time has been given to other subject areas, - subject areas to which this applies varies within the three year groups affected.

Appendix 1

Curriculum outline and organisation 2016-2017

Years 7, 8 + 9

Cohort is divided into 6 ability sets - each set being made up of fewer students as one descends down the structure.

The curriculum is based on a two week timetable (green week and yellow week) with 52 one hour teaching periods over the fortnight. The tables below show how many one hour lessons are allocated to each subject over a two week cycle. Variations between sets is to accommodate extra curriculum time for some sets in certain subject areas.

Key Stage 3

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
English	8 7-3 has 10 periods	7 8-3 has 8 periods	7
Mathematics	7	6	7
Science	5	6	5
Spanish	4 7-3 do not study Spanish	0 8-2 has 5 periods 8-3 has 4 periods	6 9-2 + 9-3 have 4 periods
Technology	3	3	3 9-2 + 9-3 have 4 periods
History	3	3	3
Geography	3	3	3
Religious Education	2	2	3
Art	2 7-3 has 3 periods	2	2
Music	2	2	2
Drama	2	2	2
ICT	3 7-3 has 4 periods	4 8-2 + 8-3 have 5 periods	4 9-2 + 9-3 have 5 periods
Physical Education	5	4	4
PSE	2	2	2
French		6 8-2 + 8-3 do not study French	

Key Stage 4

	Year 10	Year 11
English	8	8
Mathematics	8	8
Science	10	10
Religious Education	1	2
Citizenship	2	2
Physical Education	3	3
ICT/Bus. Comm.		5
Options A, B, C		5
Options G, P, R, W	5	

All students study:

English, Mathematics, Science, Re (short course), Pe, Citizenship - students will be set according to ability. For the aforementioned subjects the cohort is divided into two populations (A-C) and (1-3).

Year 11 - All students study an ICT based subject; the students are not set according to ability in these subjects.

In addition, the students choose to study additional subjects from a list offered - this may be a 'guided' choice for a few students and it may also mean some students choose less subjects in order to have extra time on English/Mathematics and/or on their option choices.

The list of GCSE subjects offered includes:

Art, Drama, Dt Textiles, Dt Resistant Materials, Hospitality & Catering, Re, Sociology, Psychology, Pe, Photography, Computer Science, Triple Science, History, Geography, French, Spanish, Business Studies, ICT.

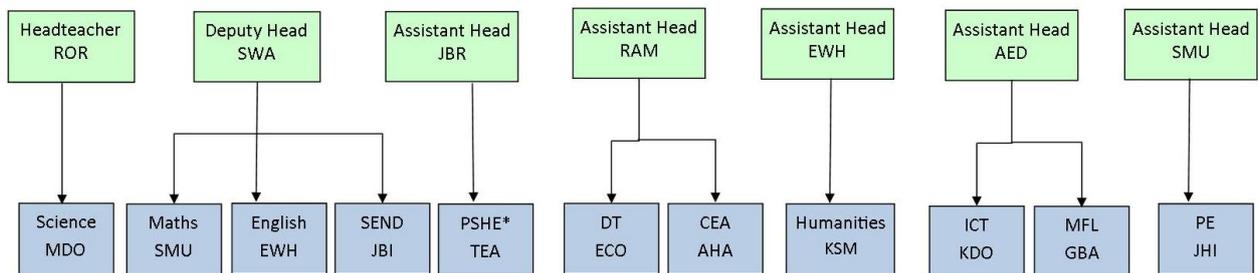
The list of BTEC subjects offered includes:

Dance, Sport, Drama, Music

We try to ensure each student is looked at individually so that each can be successful. - A great deal of work regarding options is covered in Citizenship lessons leading up to Options assemblies and Options evening. Once the students have chosen their option subjects, we compare the Year 9 data with their choices so as to ensure each child has chosen wisely and can therefore be successful.

Appendix 2

SLT Curriculum Link Structure 2016/17



Key

SLT Link

Curriculum Leader

*PSHE/Citizenship/Social Sciences/IAG

Appendix 3

Lesson Observation Form 2016-17

Member of Staff		Date/Time	
Observer (s)		Class	
Teaching Standards: Not met standards:		Met standards:	
Exceeded standards:			
		Met	Comment
Learning Environment	1. Classroom: The classroom is tidy and the displays are current and include students work, level examples, any routines, literacy focus, key words and learning prompts.		
Classroom Routines	2. Welcome: Students are welcomed as they enter the classroom to establish positive attitudes to learning. <i>(Opportunity to check uniform and monitor behaviour on corridors).</i>		
	3. Resources: Teacher ensures that the resources for the lesson are organised and level appropriate so that students' learning proceeds without time being wasted. Students have necessary equipment.		
	4. Do Now/ Settler: There is a short activity for students to complete		
	5. A Strategic Seating Plan: used effectively to pitch learning so that all groups of learners make excellent progress		
Learning Objectives and Outcomes	6. Displayed: once introduced, the Learning Objective is made visible and verbal.		
	7. Explored: Students are engaged in the Learning Objective by discussing it to secure understanding.		
	8. Learning Outcomes: differentiation in terms of content, process or product. This allows all students to understand how to make rapid progress in their learning.		
Student voice:		Literacy:	

Please comment upon – Start of the lesson/ Learning ethos/ Use of support staff/ Planning for learning/ Subject Knowledge/ Engagement, pace and Pitching up/ Quality of resources/ Classroom management/Close of the lesson/ Opportunities for assessment/Inclusion and equal opportunities/Evidence of independent/ collaborative learning/ Development of knowledge and skills/Differentiation/ Questioning.

Areas of Success

Areas for development

<p>Feedback Please comment upon assessment of learning in class, evidence of constructive marking and feedback (oral and written), student comments (oral and written), homework, assessment opportunities in books</p>	
<p>Teacher Expert in...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">---	
<p>Seek out an Expert in...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">---	

<p>Any other comments</p>	
<p>Observer:</p>	<p>Observee:</p>

Exceeded TS: Teacher is extremely competent in almost all areas of teaching and learning and therefore the progress that is made by students is above expectations

Met TS: Teacher is competent in most areas of teaching and learning and therefore the progress that is made by students is in line with expectations

Not met TS: Teacher needs development in some areas of teaching and learning and therefore the progress that is made by students is below expectations

Appendix 4

Y7	ALL DAY	<p>6 part rotation involving: 50mins per session St John Ambulance (A5), Dogs Trust (D4), Fire Service (A4), Water Aid (D3), Deaf Service (A2), First Aid (A2) CCO, PRA, RYO, SWI, AHN, MAB, GG1 (VRA, HBI, PD1, JBR, CCN, MW1, KCA)</p>
Y8	ALL DAY	<p>6 part rotation involving: 50mins per session Blood (E2), Organ animation (C10), Kidney (E3), Religion v Organ donation (D11), Organ selling (E7), Organ case study (D10) WTA, KDO, SKH, GBA, CGA, VGO, CGR (JSO, SSI, USH, AGR)</p>
Y9	ALL DAY	<p>3 part rotation involving: Tough Cookies (A11 +A12) NK Theatre group in main hall (Sexting/online safety Kudos (B2) / Nutrition (A9) / Blind (A8) CTA, AHA, MDO, CDE, LCR, KOS, TEA (MW1, SWA, SMU, AGR)</p>
Y10	8.45am – 11.30am	<p>10ABCD - Health + Fitness - JHI + DBI + NPI + MWA (Sportshall + G4) (8.45am – 10.00am) 10-123 - Health + Fitness - HOD/LLO (C20) + HBI/MKE (D10) + ESK/KSM (D9) + JWA/CCN (B2) (10.00am – 11.30am) 10ABCD - Health + Fitness - HOD/LLO (C20) + HBI/MKE (D10) + ESK/KSM (D9) + JWA/CCN (B2) (8.45am – 10.00am) 10-123 - Health + Fitness - JHI + DBI + NPI + MWA (Sportshall + G4) (10.00am – 11.30am)</p>
	11.30am – 2.45pm	<p>5 part rotation involving: 30mins per session (approx.) Career Interviews (Outside agencies) in G1 + G3 (HL1+MKE+JCA) First Aid in A1 (C Hood + JBI) Kudos in F6 (AHH + USH) Positive Steps in B1 (Outside agency + JSO) Apprenticeship/Ambassador Programme in D5 (Outside agency + KSM)</p>
Y11	8.45am – 11.30am	<p>5 part rotation involving: 30mins per session (approx.) Career Interviews (Outside agencies) in G1 + G3 (KH1+JCL+JCA) First Aid in A1 (C Hood + JBI) Positive Steps in B1 (Outside agency + AHH) Intraquest in A10 (Outside agency + HEL) Apprenticeship/Ambassador Programme in D5 (Outside agency + KBA)</p>
	11.30am – 2.45pm	<p>11ABCD - Health + Fitness - DBI + NPI + MWA (Sportshall + G4) (11.30am – 1.30pm) 11-123 - Health + Fitness - (HOD+LLO in C20) +(JCL+KCA in D10) + (SSI+ESK in A8) + (KBA+HEL in C19) (1.30pm – 2.45pm) 11ABCD - Health + Fitness - (HOD+LLO in C20) +(JCL+KCA in D10) + (SSI+VRA in D8) + (KBA+JWA in C19) (11.30am – 1.30pm) 11-123 - Health + Fitness - DBI + NPI + MWA (Sportshall + G4) (1.30pm – 2.45pm)</p>