

Aldridge Curriculum Policy

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1. Our Vision

To offer all Aldridge learners the chance to have agency over their futures and transform their lives through a stimulating, enriching and enjoyable education, including the hardest to reach.

2. Our Ambitions

All our schools and learning providers have a strong and inclusive culture where every individual can thrive and where every individual feels safe. The culture described in documentation is exactly what you see in every corridor and every classroom (100%)

Staff are able to work smartly through the creation of high-quality and relevant curriculum materials that meet the Aldridge Standard. As a result, they can focus in on data-informed instruction, on responsive teaching and on adaptation of resources to meet both the learning needs and the specific gaps of individuals and groups of learners.

That every learner will discover things that interest them through our curriculum opportunities and leave with clarity about their desired place in our world, with the qualities of character to be successful and with great outcomes – all of which lead them to sector-best destinations in which they sustain their places and successfully achieve their aspirations.

3. Intent, Implementation, Impact

‘The curriculum is a framework for setting out the aims of a programme of education, including the knowledge and understanding to be gained at each stage (intent); for translating that framework over time into a structure and narrative, within an institutional context (implementation) and for evaluating what knowledge and understanding pupils have gained against expectations (impact).’

(Ofsted, Curriculum: intent, implementation, and impact. Dev. work for the new inspection framework, 2017)

3.1 Introduction

The curriculum is all the planned activities that are organised to promote learning and personal growth and development. It includes not only statutory requirements but ensures a “broad and balanced” provision, and a range of extra-curricular activities organised by schools in order to enrich the experience of pupils. It also includes the ‘hidden curriculum’, or what children learn from the way they are treated and expected to behave. We aim to teach pupils and learners how to grow into positive, responsible people, who can work and co-operate with others while developing knowledge and skills, so that they achieve their true potential.

Aldridge Education endorses school curricula which are both **effective** and **efficient**.

This policy applies to all Aldridge Education schools and learning providers. The appendices to this policy are specific to each school and/or learning provider.

The school-specific content found in the appendices is appropriate to the nature of the school’s individual provision and reflects the needs of its local community.

3.2 Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the following guidance from the Department for Education (DfE):

- The [National Curriculum \(2013\)](#), which all maintained schools in England must teach and which all Aldridge schools must be able to refer to when evidencing a “broad and balanced” curriculum
- The [Independent School Standards \(2019\)](#)
- The [Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014](#) and [Equality Act 2010](#), and refers to curriculum-related expectations of governing boards set out in the Department for Education’s [Governance Handbook \(updated 2020\)](#)

- The [Academies Act 2010](#)
- The [Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework \(updated 2021\)](#)
- [Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education \(2021\)](#)
- [KCSiE September 2022](#)
- This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3.3 Aims

- Provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils that's coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge for skills and future learning and employment
- Enable pupils to develop knowledge, understand concepts and acquire skills, and be able to choose and apply these in relevant situations
- Develop pupils' independent learning skills and resilience
- Support pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development
- Support pupils' physical development and responsibility for their own health, and enable them to be active
- Promote a positive attitude towards learning that enables them to work towards achieving their goals
- Ensure equal access to learning for all pupils, with high expectations for every pupil and appropriate levels of challenge and support
- Have a high academic/vocational/technical ambition for all pupils

3.4 Who was consulted?

Aldridge Education worked with school leaders to develop this policy. Local protocols found in the appendices to this policy have been determined in consultation with parents, pupils, and staff. This policy applies to all schools and learning providers across the Aldridge Education Trust whereas the appendices to this policy are specific to each school. The appendices set out how each school specifically implements the policy practically at a local level. This content is appropriate to the nature of each school and learning provider's provision and reflects the needs of their local community.

3.5 Scope and Publication

This policy is publicised to all parents, pupils, and staff. The policy is provided to staff on the Trust's intranet; is available on the Trust and school website, and upon request. This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible formats as required.

The structure of the school's curriculum can be found in [Appendix A](#) of this policy. This covers the subjects taught and offered in each year group along with the amount of time allocated to each subject. This is available on the school website, and upon request.

This policy and its appendices also refer to and covers:

- Homework
- Cultural capital and extra-curricular experiences
- Reading

3.6 Curriculum Priorities

The CEO and LGC will also ensure that in all schools a robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets. These will include the following Trust-wide priorities:

- We believe teacher subject knowledge is vital to strong education and expect to have subject specialist teaching in our schools. Wherever possible, staff teach their degree subject only and

a strong A level outcome (or equivalent) is a minimum to teach students up to and including GCSE level in the secondary phase.

- We avoid split classes for students except when teaching separate sciences or when sixth form teaching would benefit from two staff combining to cover the full content of a specification.
- We limit the number of 'preps' for teachers in the secondary phase with 2 being ideal and 3 being the maximum we intend to deploy. (By reducing the amount of separate year group and subject preparation a teacher has to do, we create more time for adaptation to the needs of each group and to a data-informed approach to teaching.)
- We create curriculum materials and resources to an agreed 'Aldridge Standard' and deploy our Trust Curriculum Review Tool to keep track of our curriculum work and to help shape future and ongoing resource development.
- We take a data-informed approach to curriculum planning and implementation, in line with the Aldridge Playbook in use across our Trust.
- All Aldridge schools work to a minimum aspiration of FFT20 (Fischer Family Trust targets) for student outcomes
- The school is complying with its funding agreement and teaching a "broad and balanced curriculum" which includes English, maths, science and (subject to providing the right to withdraw) religious education, and enough teaching time is provided for pupils to cover the requirements of the funding agreement
- Proper provision is made and adaptation in place for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with special educational needs (SEN)
- All courses provided in secondary schools, for pupils below the age of 19 that lead to qualifications, such as GCSEs and A-levels, are approved by the secretary of state
- The school implements the relevant statutory assessment arrangements
- It participates actively in decision-making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum
- The school is complying with its funding agreement and pupils from year 8 onwards are provided with independent, impartial careers guidance, and that this is appropriately resourced

3.7 Curriculum Breadth

Aldridge Education is committed to providing a broad and balanced curriculum for its learners at all phases of education. In mainstream settings, the National Curriculum will be followed. In atypical settings including Studio Schools and UTCs, this will not be the case. In these settings, all students will study and enter examinations in English Language and Literature, Maths and at least a double award (trilogy) in Science. Additional to this, students will study a set of specialist subjects, all of which will be approved by the Secretary of State. This menu of provision will be intended to offer the broadest range of next step opportunities for learners in these specialist settings, leaving as many career pathways open for learners as possible in their chosen field.

All students in Sixth Form who enter without English and/or Maths GCSE will be expected to have timetabled lessons in these subjects and to enter resit examinations.

Aldridge Education acknowledges the government's national ambition for 90% of students to be starting to study EBacc GCSE qualifications by 2025 and that this is an ambition, and not a target for any individual school. The Trust understands the value of the Humanities and Languages and also seeks to encourage students towards this study. We hold this understanding in partnership with a wider sense of value for so many additional subjects including, but not exclusively, the Arts, sports, Social Sciences, creative, business and technology subjects. We recognise the importance of all of

these areas in human existence and thriving, in the economic success of this country and in the individual talents and interests of our learners.

Leaders in Aldridge Education hold the following priorities as curriculum decisions and opportunities are made:

1. We believe students succeed best when they are studying a subject they love and want to engage with
2. A key role for school leaders is to bring interest and engagement to less popular subjects in the years before option choices are made so that myths and popularly-held beliefs about some subjects are debunked and students choose to study those subjects without undue coercion
3. No barriers should ever be imposed on any student or group of students choosing an EBacc route in our mainstream provision
4. School leaders will have a plan in place for active development of progressively larger cohorts entering and being successful in EBacc subjects
5. All students should have sufficient choice in their Key Stage 4 education to ensure they are stimulated by education and enjoy what they learn
6. School leaders will regularly review curriculum structures to ensure that time is used in an optimal way to balance both breadth of choice and sufficient time per subject to ensure successful outcomes

3.8 Homework

Leaders at Aldridge Education believe that homework has intrinsic value alongside a well-taught timetabled curriculum. It is used to:

- Consolidate learning and allow opportunity for deliberate practice
- Revisit prior learning and ensure it is being committed to long-term memory
- Provide an opportunity for pre-work or pre-reading in advance of a lesson
- Provide an opportunity for extension activities
- Develop the ability to self-regulate and become an independent learner

Whilst homework may sometimes be used for completion of work not finished in a lesson, this should not be its primary or regular purpose.

Homework set should always be purposeful and receive appropriate feedback. There is no expectation about how homework will be set and this could include the use of learning platforms such as Century Tech, Hegarty and other platforms which provide automated feedback generation. When these are used, the teacher setting the homework is still responsible for reviewing this feedback and using it to inform next steps.

The setting of homework should be thoughtfully planned to enhance learning whilst keeping the workload of teaching staff manageable and reasonable.

In the primary phase, homework will be set as follows:

- Daily reading
- Weekly spellings
- Weekly multiplication tables practice
- Weekly Century Tech
- Weekly Phonics Play
- Weekly Timetable Rockstars

- Weekly CGP work in Maths and SPAG
- Project work as appropriate linked to topics being covered in the curriculum

In the secondary phase, homework will be set as follows:

Key Stage 3:

English, Maths and Science set weekly

Other subjects set fortnightly

Key Stage 4:

All subjects set weekly

Key Stage 5:

For every hour of timetabled lesson, there should be an expectation of a further hour of independent learning and work set.

3.9 Cultural Capital and extra-curricular enrichment

Aldridge Education recognises that a learner’s core timetable, whilst vital, does not encompass the whole of the curriculum offered to any learner. We seek to build cultural capital both through the quality of exposures made within the taught timetable and through additional opportunities provided by our schools through extra-curricular timetables and through other additional experiences, trips, visits and events.

All of these opportunities combine with the interactions learners have with staff on a daily basis to form part of our curriculum provision, designed to introduce students, as described by Ofsted, to “the best that has been thought and said and helping to engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement”. This means that these opportunities need to be:

- Available to the many, not the few
- Free of financial constraint for those unable to pay
- High-quality and showcasing the best of human endeavour
- Offer a route to higher levels of pursuit in an area of interest
- Regular and frequent, wide-ranging and diverse

All of this must be balanced against the budget envelope within which any school operates and the constraints of the time available for such additionality.

To support this work, Aldridge Education schools all co-create a ‘100 Wall’ where staff and students create a set of 100 experiences they would like to engage with during their time at the school. These are informed by local context, contributed to by staff and designed to be simply achievable. They draw on staff experiences of family life and things that they have valued doing as children or with their children and are designed to feel accessible to all, including the parents of our learners. These walls form a common baseline for our ambitions around enrichment opportunities in partnership with our extra-curricular timetables.

Both extra-curricular engagement and completion of 100 Wall activities are tracked and monitored by school staff and are given a high priority and a high profile within our schools.

Information about these activities can be found on [each academy website and at appendix D](#)

3.10 Reading

Aldridge Education recognizes the vital requirement for every learner to have strong literacy and the importance of being a fluent reader. Trust schools commit to ensuring that this is a priority for all

learners and to providing intervention, as required, at the earliest opportunity for individual learners and for groups of learners, where appropriate.

Trust classrooms recognize the need to both support and improve reading as part of quality first provision, enabling all students to engage with the lesson content.

Trust principals ensure that support for reading improvement is prioritized. They use evidence-based approaches to achieve this and regularly monitor the impact of strategies and interventions being used, working on the basis that if improvement is not tangible and measurable, the strategy is an ineffective one.

Please refer to the Trust's protocol on improving reading.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 The Governing Board and Chief Executive Officer

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Local Governing Committee (LGC) will monitor (see monitoring arrangements) the effectiveness of this policy and hold the principal to account for its implementation.

4.2 The Principal

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that the school curriculum ([Appendix A](#)) meets the requirements outlined in this policy and that there are recorded, routine, procedures in place for reviewing and approving this curriculum policy and implementing it in the school. (See monitoring arrangements)

The principal must ensure that:

- All required elements of the curriculum, and those subjects which the school is required to offer, and chooses to offer, have aims and objectives which reflect the aims of the school and indicate how the needs of individual pupils will be met ([Individual subject statements & outline schemes of work can be found in Appendix B](#))
- The amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the CEO/CAO
- School job descriptions clearly state “curriculum” and “curriculum leadership” responsibilities
- They manage requests to withdraw children from curriculum subjects, where appropriate
- The school's procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements ([see Assessment Policy](#))
- The CEO and Local Governing Committee are fully involved in decision-making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum
- Targets are agreed with the CEO (usually FFT20) and used across the school ([see Assessment Policy](#))
- Proper provision is in place and adaptation made for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with SEN

4.3 Other Staff

Other staff will ensure that the school curriculum is implemented in accordance with this policy.

Additional information regarding the duties of individual staff members who have specific responsibilities pertaining to the curriculum, such as heads of department, or Key Stage or curriculum leaders can be found in [Appendix C](#) (Staff structure). These positions will include monitoring responsibilities. (See monitoring arrangements)

4.4 Parents

Parent involvement helps extend teaching outside the classroom including understanding and homework. Parental knowledge of the school curriculum creates a more positive experience for pupils and helps pupils perform better when they are in school. It is essential for parents to support the learning that happens in school.

5. Monitoring Arrangements

5.1 The Governing Board and Chief Executive Officer

The Governing Board & Chief Executive officer monitor whether the school is complying with its funding agreement and teaching a “broad and balanced curriculum” which includes the required subjects, through:

- Reviewing Together visits to each school
- Formal external reviews commissioned by the CEO
- Desktop review work including review of the school’s Curriculum Review Tool
- Engagement with Curriculum Trust Leads and feedback from them
- Annual survey data
- Review of SEF, improvement plan and implementation of the Trust Playbook
- Shared data review

5.2 The Principal

The Principal ensures regular and recorded monitoring of departmental/subject/curriculum leadership. This provides evidence, through formal monitoring, of the way a subject is taught throughout the school. Monitoring may include:

- Implementation of the Trust Playbook and its range of activity
- Learning walk-throughs
- Co-planning meetings and other professional development activity
- Line management meetings
- Work scrutiny
- The way in which resources are allocated and managed
- Shared data review

5.3 Heads of Department/subject leaders/curriculum leaders

The heads of department/subject leaders/curriculum leaders ensure regular and recorded monitoring of subject teaching. This provides evidence, through formal monitoring, of the way a subject is taught throughout the school. Monitoring may include:

- Activity undertaken through power meeting cycles
- Learning walk-throughs
- Work scrutiny
- Curriculum resource review
- Shared data review

6. Inclusion

6.1 Inclusion

Teachers across Aldridge Education schools set high expectations for all pupils. They use appropriate assessment to set ambitious targets and plan challenging work for all groups, including:

- More able pupils
- Pupils with low prior attainment
- Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Pupils with SEN
- Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)
- Teachers will plan and adapt learning so that pupils with SEN and/or disabilities can study every subject, wherever possible, and ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving.
- Teachers will also take account of the needs of pupils whose first language is not English. Lessons will be planned and adapted so that teaching opportunities help pupils to develop their English, and to support pupils to take part in all subjects.
- Further information can be found in our Equality Policy and in our SEN policy and information report.

This policy will be formally reviewed every 2 years by the CEO. The appendices will be reviewed annually by the Principal. After every review, the policy will be ratified by the Education Standards sub-committee of the Trust Board.

7. Links to other policies

- Aldridge Education Assessment Policy
- Improving reading protocol
- Relationships and health education (primary schools)
- Relationships and sex education, and health education (secondary schools)
- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Equality Policy
- Home-School Agreement
- Early years foundation stage (Schools with early years provision only)

8. Appendices – See Separate document

8.1 Appendix A: The School Curriculum (**School Specific**)

8.2 Appendix B: Individual subject statements & brief outline schemes of work (**School specific**)

8.3 Appendix C: Staff structure (**School specific**)

8.4 Appendix D: **100 Wall and extra-curricular timetable**