



## CURRICULUM POLICY

Our curriculum at Jesmond Park Academy has a clear focus on the development of knowledge and skills, placing the learner at the heart of everything we do.

### Philosophy

#### Our Curriculum

Our school badge has always contained the heraldic symbol for a tower, representing solidity, strength and protection. Our Curriculum Philosophy reflects these attributes by providing students with a firm base of knowledge from which they can thrive and flourish in their academic studies.

#### Knowledge acquisition

The acquisition of relevant, thought-provoking and detailed knowledge is central to our curriculum..... so that students can undertake higher levels of study and employment with a sound educational, social, moral and cultural foundation.

#### Development of skills

This broad depth of knowledge will allow students to develop the core skills that they require in order to achieve outstanding outcomes.

#### Teacher as the expert

We recognise the central role played by teachers in delivering our curriculum, and we view the 'teacher as the expert' in every classroom. They are required to work together within and across departments in order to embed and transfer the knowledge, skills and ethos that we value as a learning community. This is an ongoing process of refinement and 'growth', and we understand that our curriculum will build upon prior learning, adapt and change in order to meet the needs of our school. We will take an evidence based approach to all curriculum decisions.

#### Aims of the Curriculum

- To meet statutory requirements for students' entitlement to learning
- To ensure that students develop essential functional skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT
- To provide students with an appropriate curriculum which enables them to reach their potential and gain the best opportunities for progression
- To ensure that students develop their personal, learning and thinking skills
- To promote students' spiritual and moral development
- To develop students' capacity for independent and lifelong learning

## Curriculum Structure

In Jesmond Park Academy there are 30 periods per week, each lasting 50 minutes, with an additional 15 minutes at the start of each day for tutorial time and assemblies. Students in Years 7-11 are timetabled for 30 periods, and have the opportunity of participating in the programme of extra-curricular enrichment activities during Period 7 which take place from Monday to Friday depending upon the nature of the activity. Some extra-curricular enrichment activities take place before the start of the school day and at lunchtime. The number of lessons for which students in Years 12 and 13 are timetabled depends on their study programme (the number and type of courses they take); all have some periods of free time for private study during the school day, some of which may be designated as study periods to be spent in the Library or other learning facility.

### KEY STAGE 3

In Jesmond Park Academy, we believe that all students are unique. We know that different students have different strengths and, for this reason, all students study the full range of the National Curriculum with specialist teaching in all subjects with a focus on embedding knowledge and development of skills in preparation for students' next stage of learning.

As our students make the transition into Key Stage 3 they continue to take the full range of National Curriculum subjects taught in our feeder schools; for some they begin the study of a foreign language. The subjects studied are English, Mathematics, Science, Citizenship (PSHCE), History, Geography, Music, French, Mandarin, Spanish Technology, PE, Computing, and RE. Some students also have the opportunity to study a second language in Year Nine from French, Mandarin or Spanish; a small number of students in Year Seven to Nine, including EAL, have additional literacy support. Some students follow a reading programme.

In the second term of Year 9, students are made a curriculum offer for Key Stage 4 with a core comprising English, Mathematics, Science, PE, and PD (Personal Development – a blend of RE, PSHE, RSE, Careers education & study skills); they are also able to choose their options at this point.

In deciding which range of subject choices is the best for each individual student, we look at assessment data from our feeder schools (including KS2 SATs), our own teachers' assessments, and core subject predictions from Fischer Family Trust. We also take into account individual students' particular needs, such as whether they need extra help with skills such as literacy or numeracy.

The courses offered as options differ according to the range of subjects that we recommend for each student. Some students will be offered GCSEs, some will choose from vocational courses, and others will be offered a mix of the two. The guiding principle behind the range of subjects offered to students to study as part of our KS4 curriculum is to enable students to gain the best set of qualifications possible in order to maximise their progression opportunities at 16 and beyond.

Within Key Stage Three students are placed into curriculum blocks and groups to best support their learning and progress. Students' grouping is varied; below is a diagram to show the organisation of the blocks and groups for the academic year 2023 - 2024.

Year 7	'English' band of subjects (En/Gg/Hi/Cz/Mu/Pa/Rd/Re)	'Maths' band of subjects (Co/Ma/MFL/Sci)		Technology	PE	
	Mixed Ability	Ability Banding		Mixed Ability	Mixed Ability Gender groups	
Year 8	'English' band of subjects (En/Gg/Hi)	'Maths' band of subjects (Co/Ma/MFL/Sci)	'Arts' band of subjects (Cz/Mu/Pa/Rd/Re)	Technology	PE	
	Mixed Ability	Ability Banding	Mixed Ability	Mixed Ability	Mixed Ability Gender groups	
Year 9	'English' band of subjects (En/Gg/Hi)	'Maths' band of subjects (Co/Ma/Sci)	'Arts' band of subjects (Cz/Mu/Pa/Re)	MFL/Rd	Technology	PE
	Mixed Ability	Ability Banding	Mixed Ability	Ability Banding High/Mid prior attaining students study a 2 <sup>nd</sup> MFL  Mid/Low prior attaining students study MFL & Reading programme	Mixed Ability	Mixed Ability Gender groups

We aim to keep group sizes as close to 30 students as possible, especially in practical subjects like Science, Computing and PE. In Technology we try to keep the group size as close to 25 as we are able.

KS3 Summative Assessment from September 2022 will reinforce the importance of knowledge acquisition by capturing knowledge achievement across the school year (7-9), removing number related references, reinforcing knowledge achievement with students, which is then reinforced and reported to parents/carers.

The school's curriculum is planned and sequenced so that new knowledge and skills build on what has been taught before and towards its clearly defined end points. This should also be born out in any Summative Assessments Strategy.

• The subject curriculum contains content that has been identified as most useful, and ensured that this content is taught in a **logical progression**, with **increasing challenge**. (Curriculum Related Expectations - CRE) systematically and explicitly enough for all students to acquire the intended knowledge and skills, therefore enabling seamless progression through Academic Years and Key Stages.

At KS3 (Yr7-Yr9) from Sept 2022 we will report to parents the following:

Level	Definition
Excelling	You are working well above curriculum related expectation in the subject
Exceeding	You are working beyond curriculum related expectation in the subject
Achieving	You are working at curriculum related expectation in the subject
Developing	You are working towards curriculum related expectation in the subject
Emerging	You are working below curriculum related expectation in the subject

## KEY STAGE 4

At Jesmond Park Academy all students begin their GCSE/Vocational courses when they enter Year Ten in the September of the new academic year. Students follow a core of compulsory subjects: English, Mathematics, Science (either Double award Trilogy science or separate sciences biology, chemistry & Physics), PE, and PD (Personal Development). Students for double award Trilogy science or separate sciences are selected carefully to ensure each student is able to maximize their very best grades. The majority of students study Trilogy.

The additional options available to students depend on their individual range of subject choices. As mentioned above, in deciding which range of subjects are the best for each individual student, we look at assessment data from our feeder schools, our own teachers' assessments, and core subject predictions from Fischer Family Trust. We also take into account individual students' particular needs, such as whether they need extra help with skills such as literacy or numeracy.

The courses offered as options differ according to the range of subjects that we recommend for each student. Some will be offered GCSEs, some will choose from vocational courses, and others will be offered a mix of the two. The guiding principle behind our pathways curriculum is to enable students to gain the best set of qualifications possible in order to maximise their progression opportunities at 16 and beyond. Students and parents who are unhappy with the offer are guaranteed an interview with a Director to discuss and find a solution which is acceptable to them.

We assist students to gain an extra GCSE qualification (if available) in their home language.

## KEY STAGE 5

At Jesmond Park Academy we are an inclusive sixth form, our aim is to provide a pathway into the Sixth Form for all our students. We offer a wide range of A Level courses, enabling students to compose a Programme of Study that meets their individual needs, supporting progression onto the next step beyond the Sixth Form. In addition to, or as an alternative to A Level courses, students can select from a range of vocational subjects that are either academically or vocationally focused, also supporting progression onto the next step beyond the Sixth Form.

Students who have not achieved a 4 in English Language and/or maths GCSE at the end of Year 11 resit in Sixth Form.

Our aim is to allow all students who have the potential to pass a course the opportunity to take it. Student support is one of our biggest priorities and the strength of our student support system is a contributing factor for the high level of student success.

We take a great deal of time to ensure that we're developing real, individual students, and we are proud of our enrichment programme which covers a huge range of activities, in and out of school and also internationally. We encourage all of our students to participate in our enrichment programme that can include building up hours from a combination of sport, charity projects, and contributions to school life, mentoring and volunteering. All of these fantastic opportunities aim to develop skills in leadership, communication, teamwork and decision making. Our students have the opportunity to complete the Gold Level Duke of Edinburgh's Award, which includes completing a personal programme of activities in five sections: Volunteering, Physical, Skills, Expedition and a Residential.

The Extended Project Qualification is available for students to embark upon, helping students develop independence and learning skills.

As in Key Stage 4 we assist students to gain an extra qualification (if available) in their home language. This is usually GCSE.

Our aim is to provide a wide range of A Level and Vocational Level 3 subject options in a framework which allows post-16 students a high degree of personalisation in their curriculum.

**Approved by the Board of Trustees on 18 January 2024**