



CURRICULUM POLICY

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Introduction

The Vale Academy provides education for students aged from 11-19 years. The academy is firmly committed to the principle of providing a broad and balanced curriculum for all students. The academy aims to provide the highest quality of learning and teaching.

Purpose

The purpose of the Curriculum Policy Statement is to detail how the curriculum serves the needs of all students. To this end, the academy aims:

- to recognise the individual needs and talents of each student and to facilitate development of their intellectual, moral, physical, spiritual and creative capacities;
- to ensure that the curriculum incorporates statutory requirements, reflects the academy's strengths and yet is flexible and relevant to students' needs;
- to prepare students for the world of work and lifelong learning;
- to promote the core British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Philosophy

The curriculum is designed to be broad, balanced, relevant and meeting the needs of individual learners in order to support good or outstanding progress. The range of subjects helps students acquire knowledge, understanding and skills in all aspects of their education. It needs to be constantly reviewed to ensure that we are giving our students the best opportunities and to ensure that it is in line with current education department/academy sponsor recommendations.

The curriculum in Key Stage 3 (Years 7&8) meets statutory requirements and is enhanced by the provision of specialist ICT lessons. Students who did not achieve level 4 or new equivalent in their KS2 English SATS are given additional teaching in small groups in Year 7 and 8 instead of a modern foreign language. However, opportunities are given for all students to access a modern foreign language and 'catch up' students may be re integrated at different points. In Year 7 students are set in English, maths and science based on their KS2 results and teacher assessments. They are reviewed every half term using CAT data and teacher assessments.

In Key Stage 4 (Years 9-11) all students study the new 1-9 GCSE maths and at least double award science GCSE. They also study the new 1-9 GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature courses. In addition to these core subjects, all students choose 4 options (Students in Y10 and 11 study 5), at least one of which must be from the EBACC suite of qualifications. A cohort of identified students are recommended for the full EBACC route, but take up of this is based on personal preference. A range of GCSEs, BTECs and other accredited courses are offered as optional subjects. From Sept 2016 2 option blocks will be 3 periods per week, which will contain the EBACC subjects and technology, and the other 2 blocks will be 2 periods per week

At post-16, through our federated sixth form, we offer a wide array of Level 3 (Advanced), courses both academic and vocational and a smaller number of Level 2 (GCSE equivalent) courses. The Post-16 curriculum is enhanced by a personal development input covering topics such as career and HE planning, financial awareness and study skills. All students meet the 540hrs guidelines for full time education. In addition strong links with external agencies are used to promote opportunities for community and voluntary work.

Timetabling

The school follows a 25 period week with lesson times of 60 minutes.

Staff Student ratios for 2016/17

Year	Students	Teacher Periods	Average Class Size
7	139	140	24.3
8	151	152	24.8
9	138	153	22.5
10	139	157	22.1
11	139	156	22.3

Main School	703	758	23.6
12	49	68	9.2*
13	29	64	8.1*

Post 16	78	132	8.7*
Whole School	781	894	

NB: Teacher periods – total number of timetabled contact periods per week (not including study support)

*Vale students only.

Subject offer and student setting 2015/16

Key Stage 3

During Key Stage 3 (Years 7&8) all students study the same subjects as required by the National Curriculum, in addition to Religious Studies, ICT is studied as a discrete subject in both years.

Year 7 & 8

- Students are taught in sets for English, maths and science.
- Students are taught in banded mixed ability groups for the non-core subjects.
- Design & Technology continue to be taught in smaller, mixed ability, but banded, groups.

Subject	Year 7 Periods	Year 8 Periods	% KS3 Time
English	4	4	16
Maths	4	4	16
MFL	2	2	8
Science	3	3	12
Design & Tech	1	1	4
PE	2	2	8
History	2	2	8
Geography	2	2	8
Religious Studies	1	1	4
Music	1	1	4

Art	1	1	4
Drama	1	1	4
ICT	1	1	4
Total	25	25	100

Key Stage 4

- During KS4 (Years9, 10 & 11) all students follow English, Maths, Science.
- Religious Studies/Citizenship and Core PE are followed as non-examined subjects.
- All students then choose a subject in each of five option blocks.

Subject	Year 9 Periods	Year 10 Periods	Year 11 Periods	% KS4 Time
Science	4	4	4	16
English	4	4	4	16
Maths	4	4	4	16
PE	2	2	2	8
Religious Studies	1	1	1	4
Options From:	10	10	10	40
ICT				
ECDL		3		
Computer Science	2	1	1	
Music (GCSE & BTEC)	2	2	2	
PE (GCSE & BTEC)	3	3	3	
Drama	2	3	2	
Expressive Arts			2	
Graphic Products	1	1		
Food Technology	2	3	2	
Textiles	1	1	1	
Product Design	2	2	2	
Art	3	3	3	
History	3	3	3	
Geography	3	3	3	
French	1	1	1	
German		1	1	
Spanish		2	1	

*Groups per year in green

Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural Education

The curriculum contribute to students' behaviour and welfare including their physical, mental and personal well being, safety and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through cross curricular themes within the curriculum. This is monitored through a curriculum audit and supplemented with a SMSC programme in tutor time on Fridays. See appendix 2.

In addition topics such as Sex and Relationship Education and aspects of Citizenship are provided for through drop down activities.

Post-16

- Students entering for advanced level study will normally study 4 AS levels or equivalent in Year 12
- The minimum entry requirement for the advanced level course is 5 GCSE at grade C or above.
- Individual subjects may specify a GCSE grade above C as an entry requirement to a course.
- Private Study/Community Service/Work Placement may be used to personalise a programme of study which exceeds the 540hrs guidelines for all students

Year 12 Advanced level programme

Activity	Year 12 Periods	% Time
4 AS level subjects	16	64
Private study/community service/work placement	2	8
PSHCE	1	4

Year 13 Advanced level programme

Activity	Year 12 Periods	% Time
3/4 A2/AS level subjects	12 to 16	48 to 64
Private study/community service	2	8
PSHCE	1	4

Examination Entry

It is academy policy to enter all students for public examinations in the courses they have been following. In exceptional circumstances, such as failure to complete a significant amount of coursework, the academy may withdraw a student's entry for one or more examinations.

Extra Curricular Activities

A wide variety of sporting (Eg football, hockey, netball, rugby, badminton, orienteering, athletics, cricket, rounders, dodgeball, rocketball and kurling), artistic (samba, taiko, woodwind, string, swing, brass, choirs, school production and plays) and academic (history, technology, science, media, geography) activities complement the academy's formal curriculum.

Curriculum Enhancement is achieved through drop down days and visits to support and reinforce the learning in the classroom. See appendix 1 for a list of trips and visits.

Monitoring

Constituent elements of the Curriculum Policy Statement are monitored throughout an academic year in concurrence with the Academy Improvement Plan. The EAB monitors all aspects of the curriculum primarily by analysis of curriculum reviews and academy performance data. Curriculum leaders and SLT line managers monitor the progress of the curriculum as it is being delivered by members of staff through regular walk-throughs, work scrutiny, departmental meetings and lesson observations