

Principles and Features of the Coombeshead Academy Curriculum

This document underpins the Curriculum Intent statement

Principle	Feature	Rationale/background	What it will look like	Where we are now and steps to be taken
Aspirational, rich, broad and balanced	Well-conceived curriculum which based on powerful knowledge and ensures curricular disciplines are embedded. Further ensures that students have opportunities to extend learning beyond the limits of a specification.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> David Didau, <i>The Learning Spy</i> Ofsted EIF, <i>Overview of Research</i> (2019) Willingham, <i>Why kids don't like school?</i> (2010) Robinson Trivium 21c (2013) MFL - Review of Pedagogy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A wide range of subjects on offer (in all key stages) including a good range of academic and creative subjects All students learn a language at KS3. Most continue into KS4. A large number of enrichment activities in all key stages (trips, teams, speakers etc) National curriculum used to model the KS3 curriculum Full GCSE course begins in year 10 Breadth of offer at Post 16 due to collaborative campus arrangement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over the last two years we have re-developed our KS3 curriculum to ensure that all students complete the full National Curriculum across Y7, 8 and 9. All students now study languages to Year 9 and 62% in the current Year 10 are studying the full EBACC (up from 11% in 2021) We are now studying a wider KS4 curriculum in year 10 with an additional option made available to students to facilitate a wider completion of the full EBACC.
Knowledge based	Knowledge organisers are used which contain key information and vocabulary. Facts are at the centre of units of work. Substantive and disciplinary knowledge underpins the curriculum design in every area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hirsch, <i>Why knowledge matters</i> (2016) Willingham Why Don't kids like school? (2010) Mary Myatt - The curriculum Gallimaufry to coherence (2018) Visit to St Martins - Midlands Knowledge Hub (2017) Ofsted EIF Overview of Research (2019) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils receive knowledge organisers containing core information for all subjects Lessons refer to and build on the content of knowledge organisers Homework actively supports the acquisition of knowledge to be used in retrieval sections of lessons Teachers continually develop their expertise in content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge. Teaching strategies are continually refined in light of this as part of curriculum CPD Students are explicitly taught techniques to memorise and retrieve information to delve deeper into the subject 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum re-developed into cycles model for Sept 20. Substantive, disciplinary and hinterland knowledge has been mapped underpinned by careful sequencing to reach ambitious end points. All teachers are using the knowledge organisers well as features for pre-learning (homework) in readiness for low stakes testing and reduction in cognitive load. 2020-22 – embedding development of science of learning e.g. Cognitive Load Theory (CTL) and how to reduce this through pre-learning / memory. All CTLs have a clear view on CPD (Pedagogical Content Knowledge – PCK) which will support expert delivery of the curriculum.
Cultural capital	A broad, rich curriculum available to all students, including which blends a classic curriculum with a sharp focus on the present and future. Opportunities to take part in enrichment and extracurricular events, enables students to broaden their life experiences and prepare them for their future.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Curriculum documentation Subject capital document 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All departments base their KS3 curriculum on the aims and ambitions of the National Curriculum which will fulfil the cultural capital demands for learning. Audits in January 2021 show evidence of where the subject curriculum goes beyond the NC to reflect needs of the local community. All Disadvantaged students will be challenged in their curriculum options choices for GCSE and A Level to ensure that they are accessing the most demanding courses if appropriate. Students and parents/carers develop awareness of how to enrich knowledge and understanding of subjects in everyday life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuing to ensure that the full aims of the National Curriculum are covered and that the blend of the classic and current curriculum enables all learners to have a rich knowledge base by the end of Year 9 (see Curriculum Intent). Significant work has happened in all areas to assess the richness and breadth of the curriculum and to adapt where possible e.g. migration through the history curriculum.
Spacing and interleaving	Curriculum planning in all subjects is interleaved in a strategic way to allow for regular revisiting of topics and developing memory so that there is an alteration in long term memory.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brown et al (2014), <i>Making it stick</i> Willingham, <i>What Will Improve a Student's Memory?</i> (2010) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subject content is interleaved in order for topics to be revisited throughout the period of study and to develop retention of knowledge and improve recall from long term memory In some subjects, assessment procedures are interleaved rather than content Do it Now activities give students opportunities to review previous learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment as part of the cycles model means that interleaving has been embedded in the form of low stakes assessment and knowledge retrieval based on memory of the current and past curriculum. Develop CTLs and Teachers' understanding of how interleaving supports the development memory schema and recall as per CPD on development of science of learning knowledge in 20-21
Regular quizzing and synoptic assessments	Low-stakes quizzing, Do It Now and synoptic assessments used to develop knowledge retrieval and support long term learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Willingham <i>What Will Improve a Student's Memory?</i> (2010) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lessons begin with Do It Now's which either quiz on previous learning or knowledge organisers Online quizzes and resources are available for students to use Regular low-stakes quizzing is a feature of lessons in all subjects Tests are synoptic and review knowledge from across the course – knowledge assessments and end of cycle assessments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently in place in all lesson as part of 'threshold' Ensure timely finish to DIN i.e 5 minutes of retrieval. DIN not to dominate the lesson Knowledge assessments at Wk 6 and 11. Full assessment in Wk 12 and then super teaching weeks at the end of each cycle all support knowledge retrieval. Further embed the use of hinge and target questions throughout lesson to enhance retrieval and memory.
Direct instruction	Teachers use direct instruction, presenting information in a format which is logical and clearly chunked. Teachers talk students through worked examples, supporting the journey from novice to expert learners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rosenshine, <i>Ten Principles of Instruction</i> (2012) Sweller, <i>Cognitive Load Theory</i> (1994) Tom Sherrington, <i>Rosenshine's Principles in Action</i> 2019 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lessons have clear objectives and progression steps and are put into the wider context of the curriculum New information is broken down into small chunks Direct instruction supports progression / knowledge acquisition Models, images and scaffolds are used to support all students to learn knowledge and skills Guided practice of key concepts followed by independent deliberate practice is a feature of most lessons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued area for development for the whole school. CPD on direct instruction and how it helps students learn in 2020-21 - build on Rosenshine and Sherrington through CPD in 2020-21. Continue to embed StOP which lays down that all lessons will begin with sharing of LO and Progression Steps / modelling / explanation as key features. Use this work to address gaps in meeting needs of SEND Continue to focus on clarity of explanations through incremental coaching programme.
Questioning	Questioning is a key element of our Model for Expert Teaching. Teachers and students ask questions to develop understanding, practise retrieval and promote metacognitive thinking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rosenshine, <i>Ten Principles of Instruction</i> (2012) Dylan Williams: Embedding Formative Assessment Tom Sherrington, <i>Rosenshine's Principles in Action</i> 2019 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers ask targeted questions to a range of students within a lesson. Questions are differentiated to encourage a range of cognitive processes from recall to deeper reflection Thinking time is built into questions Teachers bounce questions between students to deepen understanding. Students are given the opportunity to ask questions to teachers during whole-class discussions and as individuals to clarify learning. Hinge questions have been developed since Oct 2021 as a key part of assessment for learning in the Covid era 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of our implementation of the model for expert teaching, we will develop further CPD on how to develop questioning. Hinge and targeted questioning to assess recall is a key development point for teachers. All students carry a mini-whiteboard to support questioning sections of the lessons. Further embed practice on hinge and targeted questioning. Middle leaders use QA as a means of collecting data on the implementation of high-quality questioning.
Modelling and Metacognition	Students are explicitly taught how to learn. Students understand the science and strategies behind how they learn and how to remember.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EEF Toolkit, <i>Guidance on Metacognition</i> (2018) Dunlosky <i>Strengthening the Student Toolbox</i> (2013) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students learn how to plan, monitor and evaluate their work Teachers model the thinking process when addressing new concepts, ideas and problems Teachers encourage metacognitive talk and ensure that students reflect on their learning Students are taught strategies for learning, revising and using their memories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of our implementation of the model for expert teaching, we use CPD on how to develop modelling and metacognition. Develop teacher understanding of modelling and metacognition. Staff training in Autumn 2021 as part of EEF rollout. Develop our focus on learning to learn / growth mindset as part of curriculum implementation culture.
Feedback	Feedback is a crucial feature of our teaching and learning policy. We use feedback to help students progress and to develop metacognition.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rosenshine Ten Principles of Instruction (2012) Dylan Williams: Embedding Formative Assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback will take numerous forms: written, verbal, teacher-led, peer assessment and self-assessment. Feedback will normally refer to key objectives and/or assessment criteria. Students will be allotted specific time in which they will respond to feedback, make improvements and/or address whole-class and/or individual feedback. A 'frenzy of purple pen' annotation will be found in books as students respond to the multiple forms of feedback. All students will hold their own purple pens as part of expected equipment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to ensure purple pen is embedded into everyday practice. Develop proficiency for monitoring progress through hinge questions and review of progression steps. Embed StOP for marking and feedback to ensure that DIRT time is happening regularly and particularly in response to key assessments at least once per half term. All departments to embed own marking systems in response to whole school system.
Responsive teaching	Teaching that is constantly adapting based on information from teacher assessment of learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making every lesson count Allison & Tharby (2015) Model for expert teaching Bearne (2016) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SEND pupil profiles are enacted before the lesson to support access. Use of assessment strategies in lessons e.g, Do It Now, Quizzing Questioning techniques probing understanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SEND pupil profiles to be part of the Teaching and Learning StOP. Middle Leaders and Line Managers to ensure SEND profiles are actioned.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers provide whole class feedback in place of individual feedback to address common misconceptions DIRT time used to allow students to act on feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See development work on questioning as part of the model for expert teaching. Focus on whole school CPD as part of increased SENCO time on campus.
Literacy	We recognise that strong literacy skills are the key to academic success. Literacy skills are taught explicitly and are embedded throughout our curriculum.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quigley: Closing the Vocabulary Gap (2018) Barton: Don't Call it Literacy (2012) Didau: The Secret of Literacy (2014) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tier two and three vocabulary is taught explicitly in every faculty. Fraye models are used as an everyday part of teaching. Reading is valued for its intrinsic worth and its position as a key tool for accessing and demonstrating learning. Writing is taught through the use of scaffolds, models and deliberate practice. Students with weak literacy skills are supported through Accelerated Reader throughout KS3 and supported with literacy interventions in KS4. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whole staff CPD on vocab and the rationale for teaching it – implement Frayer Model for key terminology in 2020-21 Continue to embed Coombeshead Canon and Tutor Reading Programme. Focus on marking SpAG as part of the marking and feedback StOP as well as live marking after the C-19 pandemic Training on live marking.
Character Education	The values which underpin character education are threaded throughout the academic and pastoral curriculum under the banner of Coombeshead 1,2,3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Duckworth <i>Character Strengths adapted from the work of KIPP Schools USA</i>. BGLC has adapted Self Control and Social Intelligence from within the character strengths to work hard, be kind. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Pastoral Curriculum is built around the development of character strengths that will support young people to be successful academically and in their wider lives. Students record where they have either experienced / been taught about or, ideally, demonstrated their application of these strengths. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Coombeshead commitment – an entitlement curriculum for all students to build confidence, PSHE curriculum to be developed to reflect character values. New CTL for Life Skills to develop focus on 'character education'
Attitudes for learning	High expectations of, and for, all learners, are supported by clear routines, structures and systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Syed <i>Black Box Thinking</i> (2015) Dweck <i>Growth Mindset</i> (2008) Dunlosky <i>Strengthening the Student Toolbox</i> (2013) Oakes and Griffin, <i>The A-level Mindset</i> (2016) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationships between staff and students are noticeably positive Routines and behaviours for learning are actively taught to students Effort and success are celebrated and rewarded (Awards ceremony / celebration assemblies) Students are taught about effective study techniques in lessons, assemblies and revision sessions Students are taught about the importance of mindset (VESPA at P16) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embed the StOP for routines as part of Teaching and Learning StOP Develop awards ceremony to reward and celebrate Coombeshead Way Ensure each subject teaches specific revision strategies for the subject area Embed changes to the behaviour policy from March 2021 which places the teacher back at the heart of the process and a focus on restorative justice.
Preparation for adult life	Students have access to careers based education throughout Y7-13. They also have access to employer based links in order to widen aspirations and ambitions relevant to the local business market.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DEF guidance September 2019 Gatsby benchmarks Compass Online 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Careers embedded into PSHE Y7-13. Students have regular access to employers through specialist events, assemblies, work experience and external shows which can widen ambition and aspiration. The school employs for 1 day a week a careers advisor who provides bespoke advice for all learners at pre-16 and pre-18. Careers advice is targeted to the most in need e.g. DS / SEND 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaison with Enterprise Coordinator (heart of the South West) to support access to local employers Continued review of Compass Tracker document to monitor and assess progress towards Gatsby benchmarks New CTL for Life Skills further develops careers as part of every curriculum area.