



# Curriculum Policy

## Physis Heathgates Academy

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## **Legislation**

Regulatory Requirements, Part 1, paragraph 2(2) (i) to (x) Quality of Education Provided (curriculum) (teaching) of The Education (Independent School Standards Compliance Record) (England) (Amendment) Regulations.

## **Context and Ethos**

Physis Heathgates Academy is a specialist Independent School in Shropshire providing education to girls aged 11-18 who are at risk or who have been victims of exploitation, trafficking, abuse and neglect. The Academy delivers individualised educational provision to students whose complex needs, require high levels of understanding, consistency and continuity through an integrated therapeutic approach.

Our aim is for high standards of attainment by providing an individualised bespoke curriculum. To ensure the students are provided with a safe and secure nurturing environment. Helping students to have a positive and confident attitude towards themselves and belief in their abilities in order for them to achieve their full potential.

The underlining ethos of the school is humanistic in that we maintain a strong commitment to our belief that given the appropriate level of engagement, support, resource and encouragement, that children and the young people we work with can make sense of their past experiences, make full use of opportunities on offer, and subsequently live fulfilled and productive adult lives.

## **Aims**

- To establish a consistent curriculum framework across the school.
- To support a smooth transition back into mainstream education, further education or employment.
- To provide a broad and rich curriculum offer, which inspires pupils to learn.
- To promote positive attitudes to learning.
- To promote the behaviour and welfare of pupils, including their physical, mental and personal well-being, safety and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- To promote preparation for and an appreciation of life in modern Britain.
- To provide a range of subjects and courses to help pupils acquire/improve their knowledge, understanding and skills in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technical, human, social, physical, sporting, creative and artistic learning.
- To provide opportunities across the whole curriculum for pupils to develop the necessary skills to make progress in reading, writing, communication and mathematics.
- To supplement the formal curriculum with extra-curricular opportunities for pupils to extend their knowledge and understanding.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

## **Governing Body**

The Governing Body will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation. The Governing Body will also ensure that:

- A robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets
- Enough teaching time is provided for students to cover the National Curriculum and other statutory requirements
- Proper provision is made for students with different abilities and needs, including children with special educational needs (SEN)
- All courses provided for students below the age of 19 that lead to qualifications, such as GCSEs and Alevels, 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
- It fulfils its role in processes to disapply students from all or part of the National Curriculum, where appropriate, and in any subsequent appeals
- Students are provided with independent, impartial careers guidance, and that this is appropriately resourced. These responsibilities are delegated by the Governing Body to the Curriculum and Standards Committee.

## **Headteacher**

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to, and that:

- All required elements of the curriculum, and those subjects which the school chooses to offer, have aims and objectives which reflect the aims of the school and indicate how the needs of individual students will be met
- The amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the Governing Body
- Where appropriate, the individual needs of some students are met by permanent or temporary disapplication from all or part of the National Curriculum
- They manage requests to withdraw children from curriculum subjects, where appropriate
- The school's procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements
- The Governing Body is fully involved in decision-making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum
- The Governing Body is advised on whole-school targets in order to make informed decisions
- Proper provision is in place for students with different abilities and needs, including children with SEN

## **The National Curriculum**

The 'basic' school curriculum includes the 'national curriculum', as well as religious education and sex education. The national curriculum is a set of subjects and standards used by primary and secondary schools, so children learn the same things. It covers what subjects are taught and the standards children should reach in each subject.

Whilst independent non-association schools are not obliged to follow the national curriculum, each school must deliver a broad and rich curriculum including English, Maths and Science, as appropriate to each key stage.

At Physis Academy, we endeavour to give young people a Key Stage appropriate curriculum which is as close to that received in mainstream as possible.

Key Stage 3	
English	Design and Technology
Mathematics	Art
Science	Physical Education
Humanities	MFL
Citizenship	Music
PSHE	Quantum Leap Programme
	PE

Key Stage 4		
Core/Compulsory	Foundation Subjects	Optional Subjects
English Maths Science	Physical Education PSHE/Careers Citizenship Employability	Arts Design and Technology (Food Tech) Humanities (History / Geography) Performing Arts PE Modern Foreign Languages
Additional Vocational Options may be provided either within the school, across the schools or via external partners. Availability is dependent on staff expertise and availability and course availability with partners. Duke of Edinburgh Awards are to be introduced from April 2022.		

Key Stage 5		
Compulsory	Foundation Subjects	Optional Subjects
Where a good level GCSE qualification has not already been achieved, a GCSE or equivalent Level 2 qualification will be studied in:  English	Physical Education PSHE/Careers Citizenship	Employability Arts Design and Technology (Food Tech) Humanities (History / Geography)

Maths		Modern Foreign Languages
Additional Vocational Options will be provided either within the school, across the schools or via external partners. Availability is dependent on staff expertise and availability and course availability with partners.		

## External Education/Vocational Options/Curriculum enhancement

Where a young person is assessed as being an appropriate candidate, provision with an external provider may be possible. This is heavily dependent on a number of factors:

- Course availability - the course needs to be run locally and there have to be spaces on the course.
- Age of pupil – a course may not be available for some pupils due to their year of study. E.g. nursing work experience is not available to unqualified people.
- Time of year – some courses are only available to start at the beginning of the academic year.

Work experience is made available for year 10 pupils and preferences are accommodated where possible. It is also available for year 11 pupils where appropriate and with consideration of GCSE exams – for pupils on GCSE programs it is generally not recommended after Christmas of year 11. The same consideration is given for year 12/13 pupils, although there is more time available for inclusion as 25-hour programs are not compulsory at KS5 as they are in KS3 and 4.

## Course availability (External Providers Post 16)

North Shropshire College, Sir John Talbot's Sixth Form and Shrewsbury College offer a full range of post 16 courses available for pupils who can start in September.

The Sixth Form only offers A levels, some BTEC qualifications and retakes in English & Maths at GCSE. A start as late as up to October half term but cannot be guaranteed. Normal admission procedures apply. If a pupil has been following an A level course up to the point where they move to Shropshire, a transfer may be possible and will be considered on an individual basis by the college. Full details of the qualification title and exam board will be required by the college. If the exam boards do not match up, it may be that the course cannot be transferred.

Shrewsbury and North Shropshire College can offer a range of GCSEs and vocational qualification to those in KS5. GCSE Maths and English are encouraged if not already achieved. Normal admission procedures apply. If a pupil has been following a course up to the point where they move to Shropshire, a transfer may be possible and will be considered on an individual basis by the college. Full details of the level of study, qualification title, exam board and any units completed will be required by the college.

Some work ready courses are available for KS5 as roll-on-roll-off. These are offered by County Training or via Shrewsbury/ North Shropshire College. Shrewsbury/ North Shropshire College has more limited start times: September & January.

Apprenticeships are available for KS5. A weekly wage is paid, and training units are completed through County Training. These can be transferred to a home area.

Level 1 hairdressing can be offered through County Training at either KS4 or KS5. This would lead on to further study at a later stage. A qualification can only be completed if there is enough time to do the work – minimum 6 months.

Other courses can be sourced as required at other colleges; like TCAT (Telford). Admission is dependent on local requirements.

## Accreditation

Wherever possible, all learning opportunities will be accredited courses with an exam board and where time constraints allow, pupils will be encouraged and supported to achieve GCSEs. Where this is not possible due to significant gaps in attainment, time constraints or other mitigating factors, Functional Skills will be promoted in English and Maths up to and including Level 2. Functional Skills may also be provided as transitional study towards GCSEs. Regular opportunities will be provided throughout the academic year to sit Functional Skills examinations.

Physis Academy also offers a range of Btec/ AQA courses to support our more vocational pupils to achieve and gain valuable insight into alternative courses. Btec's/ AQA's also allow pupils to gain practical knowledge and experience such as IT skills, role-play, research and presentation skills, that will support them in their transition towards further education, apprenticeships or the workplace. GCSEs, AQA, Btec's or Functional Skills at Level 1 and 2 will support a transitional plan back to mainstream education or provide pupils with greater prospects when entering into the next phase of their education.

<b>Accredited Learning Programmes 2023/2024</b>	
<b>(The current exam board is stated, but others will be used for continuation of qualifications partially completed)</b>	
<b>Programme Title &amp; Awarding Body</b>	<b>Level of Award</b>
<b>English &amp; Literacy</b>	
AQA GCSE English Literature	GCSE (1-9)
AQA Functional Skills English	Entry Level 1, 2, 3 Level 1 and 2
<b>Mathematics &amp; Numeracy</b>	
AQA GCSE Mathematics	GCSE (1-9)
AQA Functional Skills Mathematics	Entry Level 1, 2, 3 Level 1 and 2
<b>Science</b>	
Pearson iGCSE Science	GCSE (1-9)
Pearson Science Entry Level Certificate	Entry Level 1,2,3
<b>MFL</b>	
AQA French	GCSE (1-9)
AQA Spanish	GCSE (1-9)
<b>Information Technology</b>	
AQA Functional Skills ICT	Entry Level 1,2,3 Level 1 and 2
<b>Citizenship</b>	
AQA GCSE Citizenship	GCSE (1-9)

<b>PSHE</b>	
BTEC Personal Growth and Wellbeing	Level 1 and 2
<b>Art &amp; Design</b>	
BTEC Art & Design First	Level 1 and 2
Arts Award	Levels 1 and 2
<b>Employability</b>	
BTEC Employability	Level 1 and 2

## Pupil Profile

Taking into full account the complexities and difficulties experienced by the pupils, the curriculum provides a high focus on Personal Development, PSHE and an awareness of risks and how to manage risks. It also considers the educational and academic risks associated with CSE and how these impact upon learning.

<b>LOW</b>	Truancing from school Lateness Poor concentration
<b>MEDIUM</b>	Non-school attendance Regular breakdown of school placements due to behavioural problems Poor health – impacting on learning
<b>HIGH</b>	Significant periods of non-attendance Exclusions (self or enforced) Poor previous educational experience making it harder to engage Absconding and the risk of taking others at the same time

## Quantum Leap Programme

A bespoke Quantum Leap Programme is written by our clinical team and individually tailored to each pupil, focusing on their needs. Alongside the programme opportunities are also provided and where possible accredited, to raise pupil's awareness of the following:

- Sexual and Relationships Education (sexual health, appropriate relationships, gang issues, STI's)
- Presenting self appropriately
- Stranger Danger (or age appropriate equivalent)
- Age appropriateness
- Self-image



- Identity
- Pregnancy
- E Safety – awareness of risks and dangers posed by internet and social networking, smart phones
- Essential Life Skills (Budgeting, Life Skills, Independent Skills, Careers, transition - post 16 options)
- Drugs and Alcohol Awareness incorporating Legal Highs
- Substance Awareness – Smoking
- Staying Safe – ‘the extent to which pupils are able to understand and respond to and calculate risk effectively’, eg: risks around CSE, DV, FGM, Forced Marriage, substance misuse, trafficking, gang activity, radicalisation and extremism. Support agencies will be signposted, and pupils educated on how to access help.
- Cookery and domestic skills, including high emphasis on menu planning, healthy eating and nutrition (eating disorders)
- Practical skills – variety of practical skills which would support independent living; i.e. sources of support, housing support, advice and guidance etc.

## **Skills for Employment**

Physis Academy provides opportunities within the curriculum for pupils to gain an understanding of Employability Skills including how to search and apply for jobs, completing application forms, producing a Curriculum Vitae and preparing for and attending interviews. This will ensure that pupils are equipped with the skills needed to prepare them for their next phase(s).

## **Essential Skills**

Physis Academy ensures that the curriculum provides opportunities for all of its pupils to acquire and develop skills appropriate to their age and aptitude in the following areas:

### **Linguistic**

This area is concerned with developing communication skills and increasing the command of language through listening, speaking, reading and writing. These skills are most overtly brought into focus in English lessons and also in modern foreign languages. The teaching of literacy and literary skills is not, however, confined to these subjects, and the policy of the school is that teachers of all subjects will encourage good linguistic and literary standards in all work that pupils produce. Communication skills are enhanced.

### **Mathematical**

This area helps pupils to make calculations, to understand and appreciate relationships and patterns in number and space and to develop their capacity to think logically and express themselves clearly. Their knowledge and understanding of mathematics should be developed in a variety of ways, including practical activity, exploration and discussion.

### **Scientific**

This area is concerned with increasing pupil’s knowledge and understanding of nature, materials and forces and with developing the skills associated with science as a process of enquiry. For example: observing, forming hypotheses, conducting experiments and recording their findings.

### **Technological (including Art and Design, ICT and Food Technology)**

These skills can include information and communication technology (ICT); developing, planning and communicating ideas; working with tools, equipment, materials and components to produce good quality products and evaluating processes and products.

### **Aesthetic and creative (including Art, Drama, Photography and Music)**

This area is concerned with the processes of making, composing and inventing. There are aesthetic and creative aspects of all subjects, but subjects falling into this area make a particularly strong contribution, including art, music, dance and drama. These subject areas all call for personal, imaginative, and often practical, responses.

### **Human and Social (including Geography, History and Religious Studies)**

This area is concerned with people and with their environment, and how human action, now and in the past, has influenced events and conditions. In most schools, the subjects of history and geography make a strong contribution to this area. Personal, Social and Health and Economic (PSHE) education alongside a knowledge and understanding of the world makes a strong contribution to this area.

### **Physical**

This area aims to develop physical control and co-ordination as well as tactical skills and imaginative responses. Pupils are helped to evaluate and improve their performance. They also acquire knowledge and understanding of the basic principles of fitness and health.

### **Sex and relationships education**

Pupils are encouraged and guided by moral principles and taught to recognise the value of family life. The programme for the School's Sex and Relationships Education is available to parents/guardian/carers as part of Physis Academy bespoke Quantum Leap Programme. It forms a key part of the Personal, Social and Education (PSE) subject area and has regard for the government's guidance in *Sex and Relationship Education Guidance (0116/2000)*. In accordance with the law the biological aspects of human reproduction remain compulsory for all pupils, but parents/guardian/carers may withdraw their pupils from any other part of sex education provided, without giving reasons.

### **Political education**

The promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the School is forbidden by law. Political issues are introduced and discussed at different points during the day – during tutorial time, assemblies or in a subject lesson. Issues are presented in a balanced manner and will challenge pupils to think carefully and respect other points of view.

### **PE and games**

All pupils are expected to take part in the school's Physical Education/Sports programme. Pupils can only be excused from these lessons for medical reasons, for which communication from a parent/carer will suffice, or other reasons agreed with the school.

### **Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development (SMSC)**

This policy statement and the declared values of Physis Academy are enhanced by the linked qualities of Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development. The school is non-denominational, where pupils of all faiths and belief systems are encouraged to strive for academic excellence and a spirit of open and shared enquiry, whilst developing their individual potential and qualities of character so they can make a positive contribution to the world.

This SMSC policy statement links and strengthens other policies so that the ideals of the school's ethos and mission statement become a reality for its pupils. Whilst SMSC is integral to all aspects of our curriculum, PSE and religious education make a strong contribution. Pupils are led towards distinguishing right from wrong, to respect the law and acting consistently with their beliefs and with a view to the consequences of their own and others' actions.

We actively promote fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Our school:

- Lead pupils towards becoming confident and positive contributors to their community and effective users of its services and facilities according to their maturity;
- Enables pupils to gain insights into the origins and practices of their own cultures and into those of the wider community;
- Takes steps to ensure that pupils appreciate racial and cultural diversity and how to avoid and resist racism;
- Ensures that pupils can understand and respond to risk, for example risks associated with extremism, new technology, substance misuse, knives and gangs, personal relationships and personal safety;
- Enables pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence;
- Encourages pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute to community life;
- Provides pupils with a broad general knowledge of public institutions and services in England;
- Assists pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and others' cultures in a way that promotes tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions;
- Encourages pupils to respect the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and
- Precludes the promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the school.

We also take such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that political issues are brought to the attention of pupils and they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views:

- While they are in attendance at the school;
- While they are taking part in extra-curricular activities which are provided or organized by or on behalf of the school and
- In the promotion at the school, including through the distribution of promotional material, of extra-curricular activities taking place at the school or elsewhere.

Therefore, the understanding and knowledge expected of the pupils as an outcome of our positive approach to SMSC includes:

- An understanding of how citizens can influence decision-making through the democratic process;
- An appreciation that living under the rule of law protects individual citizens and is essential for their well-being and safety;

- An understanding that there is a separation of power between the executive and the judiciary, and that while some public bodies such as the police and the army can be held to account through Parliament, others such as the courts, maintain independence;
- An understanding that the freedom to hold other faiths and beliefs is protected in law;
- An acceptance that people having different faiths or beliefs to oneself (or having none) should be accepted and tolerated, and should not be the cause of prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour;
- An understanding of the importance of identifying and combatting discrimination.

## **Inclusion**

Teachers set high expectations for all students. They will use appropriate assessment to set ambitious targets and plan challenging work for all groups, including:

- More able students
- Students with low prior attainment
- Students from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Students with SEN

Students with English as an additional language (EAL) Teachers will plan lessons so that students with SEN and/or disabilities can study every National Curriculum subject, wherever possible, and ensure that there are no barriers to every student achieving.

Teachers will also take account of the needs of students whose first language is not English. Lessons will be planned so that teaching opportunities help students to develop their English, and to support students to take part in all subjects.

## **Related Policies:**

- SEND Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Exams Policy
- SRE Policy
- SMSC Policy

## **Further Reading**

DfES guidance on curriculum: [www.gov.uk/national-curriculum](http://www.gov.uk/national-curriculum)