

Curriculum Rationale

The Shirebrook Academy Curriculum aims to make learners work ready, life ready and ready for further study. The curriculum is split into two distinct areas, the taught curriculum and the co-curriculum.

The taught curriculum aims to develop young people who:

- ✚ achieve highly
- ✚ are resilient, confident and responsible citizens
- ✚ feel supported and included
- ✚ secure positive destinations beyond school

The curriculum of Shirebrook Academy comprises a broad and innovative range of learning experiences planned for each student. A personalised curriculum offer, in conjunction with outstanding teaching that impacts positively on learning and progress that will enable all our students to respond positively to the opportunities and challenges of a rapidly changing world.

Organisation

- ✚ Students are taught in blocks of 50 minute lessons each day, some of which are double periods of 100 minutes.
- ✚ At KS3 students cover all the National Curriculum subjects and at KS4 students are offered a broad choice of GCSE and BTEC qualifications.
- ✚ At the beginning of year 7 students are taught in mixed ability groups in all foundation subjects and setted groups in all core subjects. As students' progress through KS3 they begin to be taught in ability set classes within all subjects except DT. More information regarding 'setting' can be found below.

Key Features of the Shirebrook Academy Curriculum

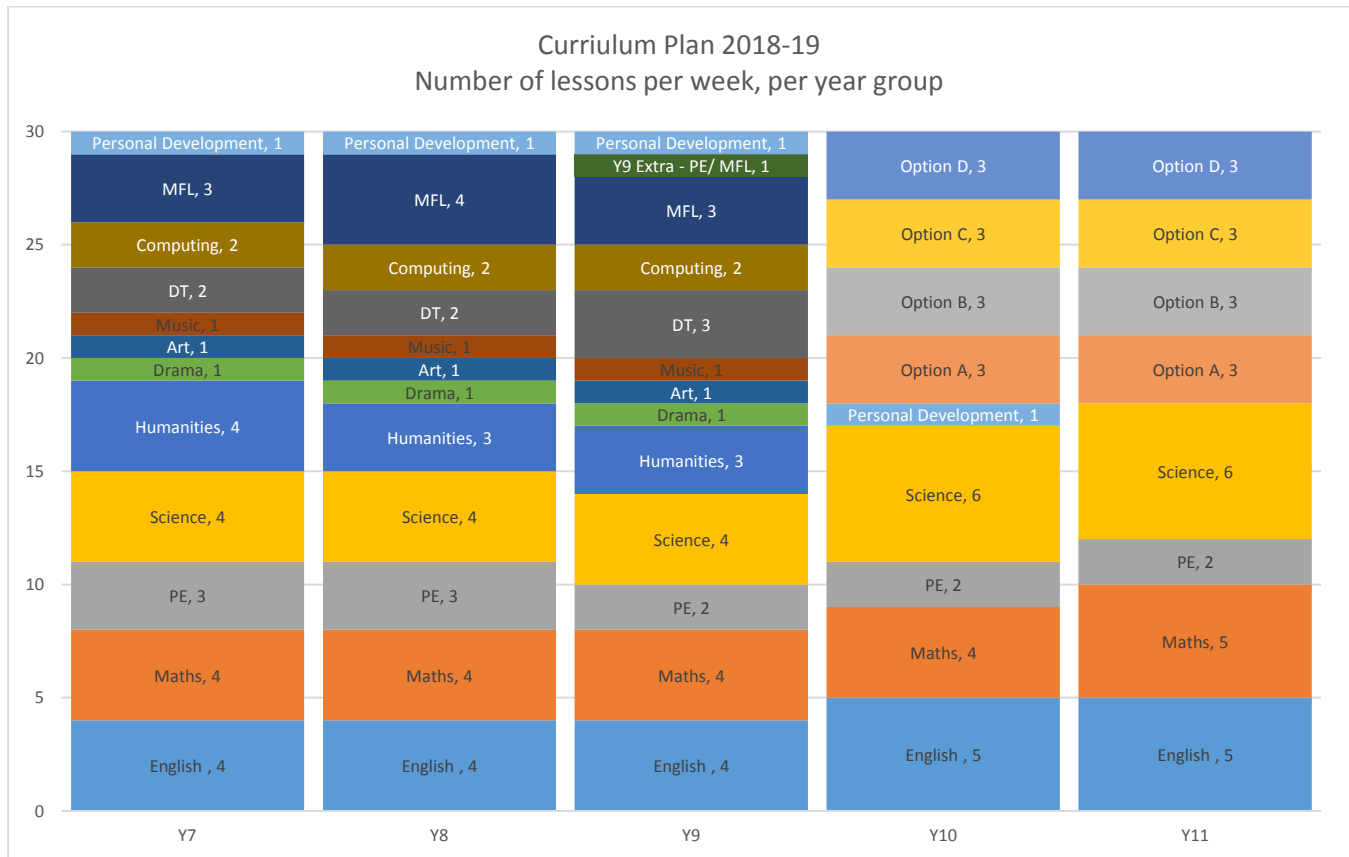
- ✚ 'Personal Development Days' and 'Personal Development Lessons'
 - Students in Y7-10 have one Personal Development lesson per week where they receive lessons based around enhancing skills to make them better learners, stay safe, and become more employable. The sessions underpin the 'Building Learning Power' initiative.
 - All students have a series of 'Personal Development Days' – days where the normal timetable is suspended and students spend time working on a personal development theme.
 - Examples of days from last year include 'Life Choices' for Y9, 'Global Citizenship' for Y8, and visits to the Lifewise centre at Magna, Rotherham for Y7. Speakers from outside agencies, such as local colleges, police, school nurse, and Connexions, offer valuable contributions to these days.
- ✚ GRIT Curriculum at Year 7
 - All students follow a 'competencies curriculum' in Year 7 Humanities called 'GRIT' This helps the transition from primary to secondary school as students work with one teacher and their form group for four consecutive lessons on a Friday. They focus on building positive working relationships, building their skills as learners and learning about their local community. The GRIT curriculum enables students to learn outside the classroom through work in the local community and trips further afield.
 - Students complete these tasks with research, presentations in different media and working co-operatively in groups. All learning underpins the 'Building Learning Power' initiative as well as delivering the content of the Y7 humanities curriculum covering geography, history and RE
- ✚ KS4 options curriculum
 - The Academy offers a traditional four-option curriculum for the majority of the students which run alongside English Literature, English language, mathematics, science and core PE.
 - Identified students follow an alternative option package which includes access to a variety of packages including extra literacy lessons, EAL lessons, learning support lessons and/or Grow 4 lessons (see below).
 - The only limitation on options choices is that each student must choose an 'EBacc subject'. These are history, geography, computer science, French, Spanish or single sciences. This doesn't apply to a small group of identified students due to their learning needs.
 - The 'EBacc' option is actively promoted with all students but is not compulsory (see explanation below).
- ✚ Alternative provision
 - Our BASE unit leads our Alternative Provision which consists of personalised programmes –
 - Grow 3 aimed at KS3 students is a horticulture and support programme
 - Grow 4 aimed at KS4 students includes various AIMS Awards delivered through horticulture and personal development
 - Forest Schools is a programme aimed at KS3 students to develop their social skills and self-esteem.
 - One-to-one sessions and small group sessions are targeted at students requiring extra support or bespoke support with a range of behaviour, social and coping issues.
 - Our Learning Support Unit leads on various learning programmes for students with varying degrees of SEND. This also includes bespoke packages for students who come to us in Y7 with literacy and numeracy levels below the expected level which run through to Year 11 where required to support learning across the curriculum.

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- EAL learners are provided with extra English lessons, some differentiated and translated resources and bi-lingual Teaching Assistant support in mainstream lessons until they are confident enough to access learning without support.

In addition to curriculum time all students have access to a full and thorough pastoral programme in which they experience a citizenship programme through tutor periods and assemblies.

Students also get to experience various Curriculum focus weeks in which there is a large cross curricular element to learning through special experiences, such as Literacy week, STEM week, PE week and languages week.



What makes the Shirebrook Academy Curriculum distinctive?

The one over-riding aim of the Shirebrook Academy curriculum is to give maximum opportunity for students to follow a curriculum that prepares them best for their life when they leave school at age 16. Our curriculum aims to develop skills to make all students safe and healthy, better learners, employable, and better citizens as well as to ensure they leave with suitable qualifications to enable them to make their own decisions and choices as to the 'next step' in their education.

Despite the introduction of progress 8 and the EBacc measure, the vision of the Academy through the Governors, Principal and Senior Leadership Team is to recognise that there is no 'one size fits all' approach at Shirebrook Academy. Through our extensive alternative provision curriculum and open options programme, students receive a very personalised curriculum, particularly at Key Stage 4, which has enabled the uptake of subjects in nationally declining areas, such as the Arts (fell to the lowest entry level Nationally in over a decade of 53.5% in 2016, and to 51.3% across the East Midlands) and Technology to remain largely constant as the table below illustrates.

	YOL 2017	YOL 2018	YOL 2019	YOL 2020
% of students with an 'art' subject (Art, Music, Photography, Media, Drama)	54%	60%	50%	49%
% of students with a 'sport' subject (GCSE PE, BTEC Sport)	23%	36%	37%	26%
% of students with a 'technology' subject (RM, Textiles, Food)	51%	61%	49%	56%
% of students with a 'ICT' subject (Computing, IT, Business)	32%	25%	35%	44%
% of students with a 'humanities' subject (History, Geography, Ethics & Philosophy)	58%	87%	85%	86%

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% of students with a 'language' subject (French, Spanish) and 2 languages (brackets)	22% (0%)	21% (0%)	24% (3%)	25% (0%)
% of students entered for Ebacc.	16%	16%	19%	17%
% of students with at least 1 BTEC subject and 2 BTECS (brackets)	37% (1%)	36% (3%)	45% (12%)	58% (4%)

1-Numbers correct at time of options being chosen – doesn't allow for in-year variations

Currently at KS4 we have no learners who study RE (Philosophy and Ethics) despite a strong curriculum model throughout KS3 with is compulsory for all learners. Students have the opportunity to choose the subject as an option at KS4 but not enough students have taken up this option in recent years to make a group viable.

EBacc for all?

The number of students entered for the EBacc suite of qualifications is significantly lower than the national average of 38% (2018) and the DfE national target of 75% to be achieved by 2022 and 90% by 2025, largely due to the limitations on the take up of a language at KS4. However, the Academy believes the curriculum model is right for the students of this community. All students are introduced to the EBacc suite of qualifications, and except for a small number of students who follow an alternative pathway in Key Stage 4, all students are entitled to and allowed to choose the EBacc options choices. This, however, is not forced upon any student, and each student, regardless of their entry point, attitude or ambition can choose to complete the EBacc or not. All students receive an open basket of qualifications to choose to study at KS4 in order to allow them, with support and guidance, to personalise their curriculum to meet their perceived outcomes and aspirations.

The curriculum model is reviewed each year in preparation for option choices at Y9 and the decision to maintain this approach to the EBacc suite is based largely around three things -

1. *Aspiration and access to further education*

Despite the community having some of the lowest rates of University applications and completion in the County, not automatically entering all students for the EBacc suite of qualifications shouldn't be seen as a barrier as other methods of raising the aspirations and addressing this low representation through –

- ✚ Ensuring that students (and parents) are aware of the availability of the EBacc suite of qualifications to most students and its status in education
- ✚ Ensuring that we offer a full suite of other academic subjects such as single sciences to support the application and aspirations to A Levels and higher level professional University Degree courses such as medicine
- ✚ Targeted work with all HA students including specific intervention focus groups
- ✚ Personal Development lessons which focus on 'skills to make you a better learner' and higher/ further education including College, Sixth Form and University visits
- ✚ Subscription to the Access Project which provides students with work place based degree level mentors in a chosen focus area as well as increased opportunities to visit Universities

Applications to Level 3 FE course from our HA leavers remains strong and each year we have a number of students who progress to Russel Group Universities who have followed an identical curriculum model through Key Stage 4.

2. *Support for local employment*

Our curriculum model at KS4 is also structured to ensure students have access to courses which will enable them to make themselves more employable in a community and region which has a large range of engineering and manufacturing businesses and health, fitness and social care based opportunities. According to the What Work Derbyshire publication by the National Careers Service within Bolsover District – 14% of all jobs are manufacturing based, 13% financial and business based, 10% education based, 9% health based and within the closest large Town of Chesterfield 23% of all jobs are in the health industry. With an open options approach students are able to choose up to three options in non EBacc related subjects. This gives student opportunities to choose subjects of a vocational nature, such as Health and Social Care, Sport or one of the three technology courses thus making them more employable in the community when seeking employment.

3. *The moral right to support the individual learning pathway that is right for each child*

At Shirebrook Academy we believe every child has a right to choose their own pathway, a pathway which could affect the rest of their life. Support and guidance is given throughout their time with us and by working with students, and parents, an extensive options process in year 9 equips everyone with the information they need to make an informed decision.

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Setting at Shirebrook Academy 2018/19

Core Subjects: English, Maths, Science

Maths

Maths set from September of Y7: traditional sets 1 to 7 based on SATs, reviewed after CATS. Expectation of sets 1 to 4 being prepared for higher tier GCSE.

English

English set in January of Y7 using SATS & CATs plus Teacher Assessment from first term in following format:

- ✚ 2 x Elite Targets (2 x 30 = 60 students);
- ✚ 2 Advanced Targets (2 x 30 = 60 students)
- ✚ 1 Standard Targets (1 x 30 = 30 students)
- ✚ 1 Foundation / SEN (1 x 25 students)

From start of Y8 move to 7 sets as follows:

- ✚ 2 x Elite Targets (2 x 30 = 60 students);
- ✚ 2 Advanced Targets (25 x 2 = 50 students)
- ✚ 2 Standard Targets (25 x 2 = 50)
- ✚ 1 Foundation / SEN (1 x 15 students)

This model to end Y11 (class sizes vary each year but no larger than above)

Science

Science set in January of Y7 using SATS & CATs plus Teacher Assessment from first term in following format:

- ✚ 2 x Elite Targets (2 x 30 = 60 students);
- ✚ 2 Advanced Targets (2 x 30 = 60 students)
- ✚ 1 Standard Targets (1 x 30 = 30 students)
- ✚ 1 Foundation / SEN (1 x 25 students)

This format through Y8.

Y9

- ✚ 2 x Elite target (60 Students)
- ✚ 2 x Advanced Target – Higher Tier If possible (25 x 2 = 50 students)
- ✚ 2 Standard Targets, Foundation Tier (25 x 2 = 50)
- ✚ 1 Foundation / SEN (1 x 15 students)

Post options in Y9 move to:

- ✚ 1 x Triple Option (30 students)
- ✚ 1 x Elite target (30 Students)
- ✚ 2 x Advanced Target – Higher Tier If possible (25 x 2 = 50 students)
- ✚ 2 Standard Targets, Foundation Tier (25 x 2 = 50)
- ✚ 1 Foundation / SEN (1 x 15 students)

Y11 (Cohort 2019 – 155 students):

- ✚ 1 x Triple Option (30 students)
- ✚ 1 x Elite target (30 Students)
- ✚ 1 x Advanced Target – Higher Tier If possible (30 x 1 = 30 students)
- ✚ 2 Standard Targets, Foundation Tier (25 x 2 = 50 students)
- ✚ 1 Foundation / SEN (1 x 15 students)

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Foundation Subjects

Y7

- ✚ Taught in tutor groups except in DT & PE teach half year groups, East/West, 4 classes in each, option to set using same method.

Y8 & Y9

- ✚ 3 classes per half year East / West for Humanities, Computing, MFL, Arts
- ✚ 1 class per half year x 30 Elite Target
- ✚ 2 classes x 27 Mixed Targets
- ✚ These are same classes for all 4 departments, set by MC & AG based on data.
- ✚ Small number of students taught Foundation Learning Literacy and Numeracy for 2 out of 4 MFL in Y8 and 2 out of 3 MFL in Y9
- ✚ DT & PE teach half year groups, East/West, 4 classes in each, option to set using same method.

NB

- ✚ Vital that expectations are high and challenge appropriate for all students. All students and all sets are equally important, both morally and statistically given P8 is key accountability measure.
- ✚ Vital that the quality of differentiation is strengthened, even in these sets some students will need greater challenge whilst others will need more support and scaffolding.
- ✚ Sets reviewed after each DC