

## **Curriculum – KS1 and 2**

As an academy, we are exempt from the National Curriculum, however, there are elements of it that we follow where we have decided that these best meet the needs of our pupils.

At the heart of our academy curriculum are three central tenants: the first is the role books and reading play in learning and life – that provides our structure. The second is the importance of the experiences that we give our students. And the third is the importance of knowledge and retaining knowledge.

### **Structure**

In each (small) term the students undertake a different unit of study. These units will have either an historical, geographic or scientific focus (or often a mixture of all three). Each unit is led by a key text or texts. For example, the book 'The London Eye Mystery' is used as a vehicle for studying London as a global city in Year 6 and George's Marvellous Medicine by Roald Dahl provides the structure for a scientific study of 'changing state' in Year 4. In line with the National Curriculum, we follow history chronologically.

We have chosen units of study that we think are vital for children to experience to ensure that they are ready of the next stage of their education and for fulfilling their part in our modern world. We have not shied away from difficult topics where we believe they are of intrinsic importance.

We strive to link every aspect of study to the key text and learning focus of each unit. However, we are aware of the need to be sincere about this. For this reason, RE, Music, MFL and PE sit aside from the main curriculum as does Mathematics. Children in Year 1 and Year 2 are currently following the Mathematic Mastery program (developed by the Ark Multi-Academy Trust), whereas other year groups follow the objectives laid out in the national curriculum. The MM program will be rolled forward into other year groups as time progresses. See here for more details: <https://www.mathematicsmastery.org/>

Our PE curriculum is led by experts: we use Forever Sport – Bristol (part of the Bristol City FC and Bristol Rugby group) to drive our PE curriculum. Experts provide structure sessions across a range of sports and the presence of the class teacher – developing the skill-set of staff whilst also providing high-quality physical experiences for our pupils. We believe in the power of competitive sport and give all pupils the opportunity to compete against others by the time they complete Year 6.

### **Experiences**

We believe passionately in the value of a fully rounded education. That is why we commit to every pupil in our academy having the chance to learn how to play a musical instrument proficiently and begin to read musical notation. Our Music curriculum is led by experts. Children learn the basics of music in Years 1 and 2, with the focus on signing and developing rhythm. In Years 3 and 4 the children learn to play the recorder, whilst in Years 5 and 6 all pupils learn to play a brass instrument – either trumpet or trombone and perform as part of an ensemble. The school as has choir which has performed at notable venues.

At the heart of our curriculum is our belief that the students will only gain as much understanding as the experiences that we provide them allow. Therefore, visits are integral to the student experience in the academy. A student in the academy will have the chance to: visit a coast-line; visit Bristol Zoo, climb to the

top of a lighthouse, explore their understanding at the science museum, ride the London Eye, see the Houses of Parliament, visit the Tower of London, and summit a peak, step back in time at the Roman Baths and many other activities.

### **Knowledge**

We believe the knowledge matters. The units that we teach provide a body of knowledge that children should be exposed to and retain. Within each unit, we use Knowledge Organisers to make it clear to pupils and parents what knowledge needs to be retained. We know from research that the act of remembering actually help long-term memory and for the reason quizzes form a key teaching strategy.

On a unit by unit basis, and across the year, this is how we 'track' pupils' progress outside of reading, writing and maths.

We believe that knowing facts and pieces of text are the basis of deeper understanding and play a key role of developing a sense of self-worth. For this reason, we teach pupils across KS1 and KS2 to memorise significant poems and be able to recite them.