Curriculum Policy

Reviewed in:	September 2026
Nxt review due:	September 2027
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The GALLERY TRUST

A community of special schools

Curriculum Statement:



This curriculum policy exists to provide a clear guide for students, parents, and staff regarding our ambitious and comprehensive curriculum at Orion Academy. With all our students having an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP), our curriculum is designed to be highly individualised, ensuring each student's specific needs are addressed while promoting their social, emotional, and academic development.

Vision and Ethos:

The intent of our curriculum is not only to educate but to ensure that every student feels valued and possesses a strong sense of self-worth. We are committed to fostering a self-belief in their capabilities to achieve, emphasising that access to equal opportunities in adulthood is not just a goal but their rightful entitlement.

- Our students often face unique challenges, addressing these needs means tailoring our educational approaches to not only accommodate but actively support their learning and development.
- High expectations for these students mean we strive for them to achieve personal mastery and academic success at levels that truly reflect their potential, despite the barriers they might face.

Our curriculum aims to foster an environment where every student feels valued and empowered to achieve personal mastery and academic success. Our curriculum is rooted in the Orion Academy characteristics of:

- **Resilience:** Teaching students to persist through challenges and setbacks.
- **Commitment:** Cultivating a dedication to personal and academic growth.
- **Empathy:** Encouraging understanding and respect among students and staff.
- **Self-Awareness:** Promoting self-reflection to understand personal strengths and areas for growth.
- **Problem-Solving:** Integrating critical thinking into our curriculum to tackle academic and life challenges.
- **Teamwork:** Fostering collaboration across all levels of school activities.

We strive to offer a curriculum that is:

- Progressive, Innovative, and Inclusive: Continuously evolving to include relevant, engaging content that prepares students for future opportunities and challenges.
- Balanced and Holistic: Providing a blend of rigorous academic subjects and opportunities for developing functional, social, emotional, and independence skills.
- Assessment-Driven: Regular and meaningful assessments inform continuous curriculum refinement and teaching practices.

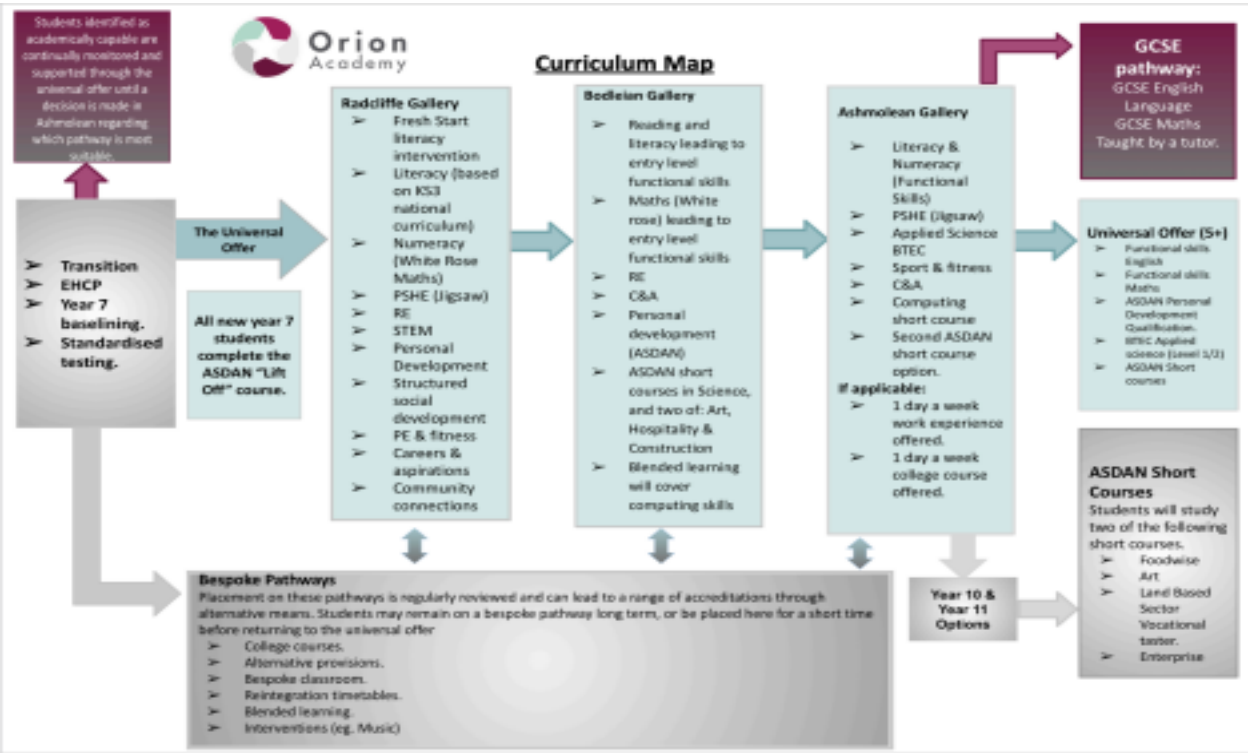
Curriculum Design:

Our curriculum is tailored to meet the ambitions and breadth required to provide meaningful learning experiences. It is structured to allow students to build new skills and knowledge through a sequenced and targeted approach.

Key features include:

- Personalisation through EHCP Outcomes: Each student's EHCP is central to their learning provision, ensuring personalized educational paths. Students are supported in Galleries that progress through the school.
- Deep Learning Model: Instead of discrete daily subject lessons, our model allows for intensive focus on individual teaching programs, which incorporate daily literacy and numeracy and a core curriculum focus.
- Engagement and Relevance: Curriculum content is engaging, relevant, and motivating, designed around student interests and the six Orion characteristics with each term themed on a specific characteristic.

The Orion Curriculum Map:



Assessment and Accreditation:

Our approach to assessment is integral to our teaching methodology, ensuring that knowledge, understanding, and skills are applied in diverse contexts. The curriculum drives our assessment strategy, which includes:

- Regular Monitoring: Utilising assessment tools and other standardised tests to monitor and support student progress.
- Responsive Adjustments: Continuous feedback from assessments informs real-time adjustments to teaching and curriculum design.
- Accreditation Paths: From Year 9 onwards, students work towards meaningful qualifications, including BTEC Science, Entry Level functional skills, Level 1 and 2 functional skills, and where appropriate, GCSE pathways through college placements or a tutoring programme.

Professional Development and Quality Assurance:

To maintain high standards of education, we invest in continuous professional development and regular quality assurance measures, including:

- CPD Programs: Focused on effective teaching strategies, use of assessments, and support staff utilisation.
- Quality Monitoring: Through learning walks, book scrutinies, lesson observations, data analysis, student feedback, assessment practices and deep dives into subject areas.

Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG)

Careers Education Information Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) refers to a range of activities and interventions that inform pupil's decisions regarding progression through their learning into further education and employability. The Education Act requires schools to secure access to independent careers guidance for pupils in years 7-13. A raising of the participation age has increased the age to which all young people in England are required to continue in education or training. Pupils are able to choose from full-time education school or college, an apprenticeship/ traineeship, part-time education/ training, employment or self-employment or volunteering.

Preparation for employment is an integral part of everything we do at the Orion Academy. While qualifications remain very important, they are by no means a sole consideration and focus. In an ever changing, fast paced world, we recognise that employability and work-readiness has become increasingly significant for employers.

The intention of our Careers and Aspirations (C&A) programme is to inspire and motivate every pupil to develop high aspirations and consider a broad and ambitious range of careers.

Inspiring pupils through real-life contacts with the world of further education and work to help them understand where different choices can take them in the future. To help pupils make a smooth transition to post -16 education, employment and training and onto adult life by supporting them to overcome barriers to participation. Identifying appropriate interventions and opportunities in supporting pupils to make informed decisions with regards to education and employment.

In order to nurture our students and prepare them for their journey beyond school, we have created an Orion's Careers Education Programme which will be integrated into our curriculum and uses the Gatsby Benchmarks as a guiding framework.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development (SMSC)

We aim to foster an ethos that promotes the personal development of our students. We therefore aim to provide all students with an education that offers them opportunities to explore and develop their own values and beliefs, spiritual awareness, high standards of personal behaviour, a positive and caring attitude towards other people, an understanding of their social and cultural traditions and an appreciation of the diversity and richness of different cultures. Our SMSC is promoted in assemblies, via our behaviour policy and our restorative practices, the modelling of behaviour from all adults and it is embedded into all areas of the formal curriculum. Please see our SMSC Policy for more information.

Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE)

At Orion Academy, we teach Personal, Social, Health Education as a whole-school approach to support our students' personal development. We have adopted the Jigsaw Curriculum for our PSHE programme of study. The jigsaw curriculum is mindful approach to PSHE, which provides a programme which offers us a comprehensive, carefully thought through scheme of work bringing consistency and progression to our students' learning in this vital curriculum area for their personal development. We believe Jigsaw aligns to our intent as a school, supporting the personal development, behaviour and attitude aspects, as well as significantly contributing to the school's safeguarding and equality duties, the Government's British Values agenda and the SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social, Cultural) development opportunities provided for our young people.

Supporting Policies:

This Curriculum Policy is supported by several other policies that ensure a cohesive and comprehensive educational approach, including:

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Marking Policy
- Equalities Policy
- Home Learning Policy
- Careers Education, Information, Advice, and Guidance (CEIAG) Policy