



WEST MIDLANDS EDUCATION & SKILLS  
CURRICULUM POLICY

## Introduction

As an Independent School, West Midlands Education & Skills upholds the Independent School Standards (2014). We deliver a curriculum which gives students experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education. As a school offering Alternative Provision for students of compulsory school age our curriculum offers subjects and learning activities that parallel those on the National Curriculum. This policy outlines the school curriculum: its principle, the values behind it, its delivery, monitoring and review.

## Our Students

Our students are all referred to us by agencies such as SENAR and other schools because they have not managed to cope in a mainstream environment. Students usually meet at least one of the following characteristics: they have been or are about to be excluded from a mainstream school; they have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP); they have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (BESD); they are in care; they have been out of education for significant periods of time; they left primary school as low - attainers.

## Curriculum Principles

- the subject matter should be appropriate for the ages and aptitudes of students;
- students should develop speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills;
- the curriculum should fulfil the requirements of each student's Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP);
- the curriculum should include personal, social and health education (PSHE);
- the curriculum should lead to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of students;
- the curriculum should promote the fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs;
- the curriculum should provide appropriate careers guidance for students;
- the curriculum should provide students the opportunity to learn and make progress;
- the curriculum should provide adequate preparation of students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life;
- the curriculum should inspire students to achieve much more than they originally believed they could achieve

## The Curriculum

### Accredited qualifications

Qualification	Awarding Body	Levels Available
Functional Skills English	OCR & NOCN	E1, E2, E3, L1, L2
Functional Skills maths	OCR & NOCN	E1, E2, E3, L1, L2
Functional Skills ICT	OCR & NOCN	E1, E2, E3, L1, L2
Science	OCR	E1, E2, E3
History	OCR	E1, E2, E3
Geography	OCR	E1, E2, E3
Religious Education	NOCN	E3
Award in Visual Arts	NOCN	L1
Award in Construction Crafts	NOCN	L1
Certificate in Construction Crafts - Bricklaying	NOCN	L1
Certificate in Construction Crafts - Painting and Decorating	NOCN	L1
Introduction to Hospitality	NOCN	L1
Skills for Employment, Training and Personal Development (SETPD) Award/Certificate	NOCN	L1
Certificate in Personal Well-being	NOCN	L1
Award in Sport and Leisure	NOCN	L1

## Subjects and Activities Available

<b>Non - Qualification Activities</b>
Work Placement - for Year 11 students
Work/College Preparation - for Year 11 students
Information Advice and Guidance (IAG)
Sports
Enrichment Activities
Educational Visits
Therapy - Talk; Music; Art
Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Skills and the promotion of Fundamental British Values
Citizenship
Personal, Social and Health Education

## Planning

A central collection of Schemes of Work for the subjects available at our school is available to all staff as a hard copy and on the school's company share drive.

The Schemes of Work offer guidance about teaching strategies, learning activities, resources, methods of assessment and differentiation for all the subjects we offer. The Schemes of Work also assist Tutors by providing potential links across the curriculum subjects, particularly in relation to spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) skills, citizenship and personal, social and health education (PSHE) and embedding British Values. Schemes of Work are used by all staff to compile session plans for all learning activities.

For Tutors planning also includes compiling the Year Plan, Individual Learning Plan (ILP) and conducting monthly reviews. All of this can only be completed after thorough review of the student's Education Health Care Plan and initial and diagnostic assessment outcomes, in order to extract important information regarding the specific learning needs and curriculum requirements. National Curriculum guidelines further inform and guide individual curriculum planning for each student.

## Curriculum delivery

The curriculum at West Midlands Education & Skills is delivered through two types of provision:

- **Specialist Provision** - this provision is for students who have an EHC plan. Each student on this provision is assigned a Tutor who works with them on a one to one basis. The Tutor is responsible for delivering the student's Individual Learning Plan according to the requirements stipulated on the EHC plan. The Tutor is also responsible for delivery of the student's entire curriculum. Most curriculum activities take place away from the school premises in designated learning venues;
- **Alternative Provision** - this provision is for students who are not coping well in a mainstream school environment and are at risk of being excluded. It is particularly suitable for students with emotional, behavioural and social difficulties. Each student on this provision follows an alternative curriculum which is delivered by Tutors according to the student's Individual Learning Plan. Learning takes place in small groups and is aimed at either preparing the student to return to mainstream school or preparing them to move onto further education, apprenticeships or employment after completing Key Stage 4. Students can only enrol on this provision if they are referred to West Midlands Education & Skills by their mainstream school or a student referral unit;

## English and Mathematics

At West Midlands Education & Skills, we have adopted the government's commitment to ensure that all students, whatever their learning route, should be equipped with the functional English and maths skills needed for success in further learning, in employment and life in general. These subjects form part of the "Core Curriculum" for students at the school and students' achievement of both English and mathematics qualifications is one of the school's key measures of attainment.

English and mathematics skills are developed and strengthened through discrete Functional Skills sessions and are further embedded through other subjects and learning activities across the curriculum. The delivery of English and mathematics is regularly monitored through observation of teaching, learning and assessment.

Student's progress in English and mathematics is a further key measure of attainment at West Midlands Education & Skills. According to the Department for Education, students are expected to make progress of three levels between Key

Stage 2 and Key Stage 4. Our students are not always with us for the full five years of secondary school, therefore the following benchmark is used:

Three levels progress in 5 years is equal to one level of progress every 20 months.

Accurate initial assessment at the beginning of each student's programme is combined with diagnostic assessment to identify the starting point for each student in English and mathematics and to highlight specific areas they need to improve in order to make progress. Tutors then focus on those areas and track the student's progress towards achieving a qualification.

### **British Values; SMSC and Therapy**

The school vigorously promotes the fundamental **British Values** of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs by embedding it across the curriculum in order to develop the following amongst students:

- 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 wellbeing 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 choose and hold other faiths and beliefs is protected in law;
- an acceptance that other 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.

**SMSC** skills are developed across the curriculum by embedding it in various subjects and learning activities. Through the development of SMSC we aim to:

- enable students to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence;
- enable students to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England;
- encourage students to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative, and to understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality of the school and to society more widely;
- enable students to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England;
- promote further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling students to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures;
- encourage respect for other people;
- encourage respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic processes, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England.

**Therapy** plays a key role in the promotion of British Values and the development of SMSC skills.

Therapy is used to:

- help students distinguish right from wrong;
- develop their self-awareness;
- improve confidence;
- help students accept responsibility for their behaviour;
- encourages respect for others.

**Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)** is about the emotional, social and cultural development of students, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity. RSE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values

RSE is taught within the school's personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum.

We have also introduced a new qualification to the curriculum: NOCN Level 1 in Personal Wellbeing.

This consists of 21 units, and students will develop skills in:

- Valuing Equality and Diversity
- Understanding Risk
- Understanding Motivation
- Understanding Eating Disorders
- Teamwork skills
- Recognising and Dealing with Bullying
- Making Decisions
- Individual Rights and Responsibilities in Society
- Enrichment Activity - Personal Well-Being
- Developing Confidence and Self-Esteem
- Beliefs and Values
- Understanding Stress
- Understanding Relationships
- Understanding Feelings and Emotions
- Understanding Body Image
- Sex and Relationships
- Personal Identity and Self-Esteem
- Interpersonal Communication Skills
- Healthy Lifestyles
- Drugs and Substance Misuse
- Developing Assertiveness

### **Support for Special Educational Needs**

All tutors receive regular training in order to equip them with support strategies for each student's specific needs. Each student's performance and progress is systematically monitored; regular reviews are also conducted to ensure that the support strategies in place are effectively facilitating learning and enabling the student to achieve.



### **Support for behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (BESD)**

Behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (BESD) can prevent students from accessing the curriculum. Management and staff at West Midlands Education & Skills are therefore committed to removing barriers to learning and encourage students and young people to achieve and “exceed expectations”.

All staff members are encouraged to employ a preventative approach when it comes to behaviour, maintaining an awareness of each students’ specific needs and following the relevant support strategies that limit the incidence of disruptive behaviour. In addition, staff actively promote and reward good behaviour using the “Points System” which is described in our Behaviour Policy.

The school also works closely with support organisations such as Child and Mental Health Services (CAMHS) to provide additional support for those students who need it.

### **Support for students with English as an additional language (EAL)**

Our aim is to promote equality of opportunity for all students for whom English is an additional language, and to deliver a broad balanced curriculum which reflects the needs of children for whom English is an additional language. In addition we will ensure EAL students reach their full potential. Additional sessions will be provided for those students who are significantly behind their peer group in language and literacy.

### **Pastoral Care**

Tutors offer advice and guidance on a 1 to 1 basis regularly. Students are encouraged to approach Tutors with their concerns as they arise;

Tutors use talk, music and art therapy to care for students and make them more receptive to learning and the curriculum.



## **Monitoring and Review**

The curriculum is formally reviewed once a year or when relevant government policies that influence the curriculum are introduced. The leadership and management team use local labour market data to plan for development, selecting subjects in the areas that will improve students' opportunities for securing employment and apprenticeships if that is their desired destination;

The annual curriculum review involves an analysis of and is informed by: subject success rates, Tutors' feedback on what works and what needs improvement and the resources or training requirements of Tutors;

Observation of teaching, learning and assessment serves not only to monitor the quality of teaching but also the suitability of the curriculum to student's needs.