



### St Matthias Aspirational Curriculum 2024-25

*“The work of an AP school is much more complex than simply imparting knowledge. It involves rebuilding the emotional damage of exclusion; developing trusting relationships often with young people who have had few trusted adults in their lives; and attempting to catch up learners who are often far behind their peers.”*

*Kiran Gill, Making The Difference*

#### Curriculum Overview

At St Matthias Academy, our ambitious curriculum is designed to meet a student’s individual needs, and provide appropriate qualifications and experiences to support their future success. Our curriculum is planned and delivered with the aim of preparing all students for the next steps in their educational pathways. Students are given opportunities to bridge gaps in their knowledge, develop confidence and experience a range of positive learning experiences.

All our students are assessed on entry so that they have access to a highly personalised education package which enables them to work towards a level of certification or qualification consistent with their circumstances and abilities. We are proud that students are able to achieve a range of academic and vocational qualifications.

#### The aims of our curriculum are:

- To provide a balanced, accessible and relevant range of learning experiences.
- To know our students - their strengths, interests and needs – and use this knowledge to make the best possible personalised offer to them.
- To develop our students as learners and as people so that they are confident and able to secure and sustain positive, meaningful and relevant next steps in mainstream, specialist or post 16 destinations.
- To provide our students with the most up to date information, advice and guidance on opportunities that they will have after leaving.

#### Curriculum Intent

The curriculum at St Matthias Academy reflects our shared values to support students to celebrate their uniqueness, work together as a community and achieve their potential. It is our firm belief that while the curriculum may offer alternatives to mainstream education, it must never be inferior.

#### Our curriculum:

- is specialised and personalised to meet the needs of individual students
- is sequenced carefully and effectively to ensure that students, however long they are with us, can build on prior knowledge which will stay with them as they progress through education
- is taught by subject experts who are passionate about their field
- empowers our students to find and develop their own voice
- places strong emphasis on developing students’ literacy and numeracy skills
- opens doors – new and old - which students may have felt were closed to them previously.

## Curriculum

<p>English</p> <p><i>Exam board:</i> AQA</p>	<p>Reading, writing, and speaking and listening skills are explicitly taught from KS3 through to KS4. The variety and joy that English brings is explored through studying fiction/ non-fiction texts, plays and poetry, and with opportunities to link to popular culture and current affairs. Students are provided with the opportunity of exploring how texts have evolved over time by having access to texts dated from Shakespeare's times, the Victorian era and the modern era.</p> <p>In KS3, three years of units of learning following the national curriculum have been carefully designed to ensure a broad range of taught opportunities are available to pupils, no matter when they join the academy. These units are sequenced to build on prior knowledge, develop key skills and build confidence to tackle a wide range of texts and writing tasks which will prepare pupils for their KS4 learning.</p> <p>We consolidate the knowledge they have gained across Key Stage 3 with a poetry unit and finally exploring a modern play text, which allows us to stretch and challenge our students in preparation for the GCSEs and beyond. The curriculum is constructed by alternating between key components of English, such as reading, writing, speaking and listening.</p> <p>Students have regular low stakes tests to inform the next steps of learning and regular formative assessments so that students who are not making the required levels of progress are identified and further supported.</p> <p>At KS4, we have a rich and rewarding curriculum that builds on skills developed at KS3. Within our curriculum, we have taken the opportunity to interleave some units so that students are able to see thematic links across fiction, non-fiction and poetry as well as using a variety of writers to influence their own creative and transactional writing</p>
<p>Mathematics</p> <p><i>Exam board:</i> Edexcel</p>	<p>At St Matthias we recognise that some (but not all) of the students placed with us, have found making progress in Mathematics really challenging in mainstream classes in Key Stage 3 and earlier stages. This can mean that students' mathematical knowledge is disjointed or missing crucial concepts and that as a result students' confidence in their own numerical ability may be very low.</p> <p>The standard placement length at St Matthias is 12 weeks, so we have designed a cyclic curriculum that will enable students, at whatever point in the year they join us, to develop their confidence and knowledge of a full range of Mathematics concepts.</p> <p>The curriculum is structured with three 12 week modules of work. With each module spanning interrelated concepts from the Number, Ratio, Algebra and Geometry and Measure sections of the National Curriculum.</p> <p>The intention and highest priorities of our Key Stage 3 Maths curriculum are to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• build students' confidence with Mathematics and in particular core numeracy and calculation knowledge.</li> <li>• cover the range of concepts in the KS3 National Curriculum in an accessible and engaging way that will facilitate student's reintegration into mainstream school following their placements with us.</li> </ul> <p>In common with the MNSP mainstream, our Key Stage 3 Mathematics curriculum intends to develop in students a deep appreciation of the patterns and relationships between numbers and to provide a firm foundation with the tools of algebra, geometry and statistics to enable students to solve problems in both abstract and real-world contexts.</p> <p>The curriculum builds on prior knowledge by consolidating concepts and standardising techniques learnt at Key Stage 2, developing and enhancing understanding of all six areas of the</p>

	<p>secondary Mathematics curriculum and introducing new concepts such as probability that provide essential foundations for Key Stage 4 Mathematics.</p> <p>At Key Stage 4 students face similar challenges with making progress in Mathematics as at Key Stage 3. As with Key Stage 3 the standard placement length for KS4 students at St Matthias is 12 weeks, so the Key Stage 4 curriculum follows a similar cyclic model.</p> <p>The Key Stage 4 curriculum is also structured around three 12 week modules of work, with each module designed to overlap, enhance and develop the same concepts in the Key Stage 3 curriculum. This implementation crucially allows us to meet the needs of KS3 and KS4 students placed in the same teaching groups.</p> <p>In addition to the concepts covered in the 12 week modular curriculum we also provide opportunities for students study statistics concepts as part of their GCSE examination preparation.</p> <p>The intention and highest priorities of our Key Stage 4 Maths curriculum are to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• continue to build students' confidence with Mathematics and in particular core numeracy and calculation knowledge they will need in future study, training or careers.</li> <li>• cover the range of concepts in the KS4 National Curriculum in an accessible and engaging way that will facilitate student's reintegration into mainstream school following their placements with us. Prioritising concepts assessed at Foundation level, but exceeding this where students are capable.</li> <li>• prepare students for their forthcoming external examinations and provide a clear message and advice on the importance and value of a standard/strong pass in GCSE Mathematics.</li> </ul> <p>Students will sit the Edexcel maths GCSE and some students will have the opportunity to sit an entry level qualification when appropriate.</p>
<p>Science</p> <p><i>Exam board:</i> <i>Cambridge</i> <i>iGCSE</i></p>	<p>Science at St Matthias Academy aims for our students to develop curiosity and an understanding of the world around them. We aim to develop skills in Scientific enquiry and problem-solving which will help our students navigate their lives in an informed and critical way.</p> <p>At Key Stage 3 our curriculum expands on the students' understanding of Biology, Chemistry and Physics by using the National Curriculum and organising its content under 5 big ideas in each Science.</p> <p><b>Biology:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The cellular basis of life</li> <li>- Health and disease</li> <li>- Heredity and life cycles</li> <li>- Variation adaptation and evolution</li> <li>- Organisms and their environments</li> </ul> <p><b>Chemistry:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Substances and properties</li> <li>- Particles and structure</li> <li>- Chemical reactions</li> <li>- Earth's atmosphere</li> <li>- Dynamic earth.</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Physics:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Matter</li> <li>- Electricity and magnetism</li> <li>- Forces and motion</li> <li>- Sound, light and waves</li> <li>- Earth in space.</li> </ul> <p>Topics are strategically planned to ensure that foundational concepts underlying each Big idea are developed and grow over time. The objective is to help each child build a scientific schema that allows them access to further understanding as they learn more. This is associated with our British values through discussions regarding the environment, the laws and ethics of Science and our responsibility to use our discoveries to help others. Career opportunities are highlighted in lessons and the successes of Scientists from all cultures and backgrounds are celebrated as we navigate through the course.</p> <p>The structure of our curriculum runs on a 2-year cycle. Biology, Chemistry and Physics topics are delivered each term with a specific focus on a single Science. Misconceptions or gaps in knowledge can be identified due to small classes and frequent low stakes assessment. Ideas in each Science build throughout the term but are also linked with knowledge and skills learnt in the previous weeks and terms. Practical tasks are used to engage learners.</p> <p>The Key Stage 4 curriculum follows the Cambridge international GCSE Single Science award. This qualification aims to deliver content which is interesting and engaging as well as providing a solid foundation of key scientific concepts. As with Key Stage 3, each topic is linked to the Big ideas of Science to make certain ideas evolve over time.</p> <p>The topics are split into the three Sciences.</p> <p>Biology: The nature and variety of living organisms, structure and functions in living organisms, reproduction and inheritance, ecology and the environment, use of biological resources</p> <p>Chemistry: principles of Chemistry, inorganic Chemistry, physical Chemistry, organic Chemistry,</p> <p>Physics: forces and motion, electricity, waves, energy resources and energy transfer, solids, liquids and gases, magnetism and electromagnetism, radioactivity and particles,</p> <p>All year 11 pupils and some year 10 pupils will have the opportunity to take the Entry-Level Science qualification in addition to the GCSE course.</p>
<p>PSHE</p> <p><i>Exam board: AQA (Unit Awards) &amp; ASDAN</i></p>	<p>Through Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) Education we support students to develop the knowledge, skills and attributes necessary to manage their lives independently, focusing on personal health and safety as well as living in the wider world. Through our PSHE curriculum we support and guide our students to give them the knowledge and understanding to confidently make informed and educated decisions that enable them to navigate the challenges of daily life safely and appropriately.</p> <p>Our PSHE curriculum is shaped through our in depth understanding of our students' needs. We identify individuals' needs through the Induction process and throughout their time with us at St Matthias and we tailor the curriculum appropriately. Furthermore, pupil voice is used regularly throughout a student's time at St Matthias Academy and we use this to review the curriculum. We use the expertise of external professionals to provide further delivery of our PSHE curriculum, such as a recent visit to each sites by Street Doctors.</p> <p>The PSHE curriculum is split into the following modules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Emotional wellbeing</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Keeping safe and healthy</li> <li>● Social media</li> <li>● Alcohol</li> <li>● Tobacco and drugs</li> <li>● Sexual health</li> <li>● Respectful relationships</li> <li>● Families and parenting</li> <li>● Financial choices</li> <li>● Careers and your future</li> <li>● Living in modern Britain</li> </ul> <p>All students gain Entry Level, Level 1 or Level 2 qualifications in PSHE using the AQA Unit awards as well as through the ASDAN PSHE Short course if they are here for a longer length of time. We recognise and evidence progress and attainment in the knowledge, understanding, skills and attributes PSHE strives to develop. The AQA Unit Awards and ASDAN programme allow us to personalise learning opportunities within our modules.</p> <p>Staff training and regular CPD throughout the year ensures staff know how to signpost to various organisations, which in turn ensures our delivery of key content responds to issues young people are facing currently and allows the curriculum to adapt to meet the needs of our students.</p>
<p>Technology</p> <p><i>Exam board:</i> AQA</p>	<p><b><i>Food Studies</i></b></p> <p>Studying Food Studies gives our students the opportunity to understand ingredients, foods, cultures and new technologies. Our curriculum supports our students to make informed choices about the food that they eat through an understanding of the nutritional properties and the sources of the food they consume.</p> <p>The four areas of assessment are broken down as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Designing Skills</li> <li>● Making Skills</li> <li>● Evaluating Skills</li> <li>● Technical Knowledge</li> </ul> <p>Students are challenged through their Food Studies lessons to develop their awareness and understanding of the following key areas through theoretical study alongside practical lessons.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Healthy Lifestyles</li> <li>● Sustainability</li> <li>● Special Diets</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Design and Technology</i></b></p>

	<p>Design and Technology is a creative subject that encourages a more ‘hands on’ way of working when designing and manufacturing products. Students are engaged through carefully tailored activities which take account of their strengths to allow them to express their ideas independently. Alongside practical activities Design and Technology theory is introduced to allow students to better appreciate design in the wider world. Regular class discussions allow students to explore ideas and observations with guidance and this is complemented with written work which builds on their specialist Design and Technology vocabulary.</p> <p>Students study three areas of Design and Technology on rotation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Textiles ● Product Design ● Design Skills</li> </ul> <p>Students complete a range of projects including CAD/CAM manufactured bookmarks and personalised tote bags.</p> <p>At St Matthias Design and Technology aims to develop students as designers, giving them the tools to analyse and deconstruct, design and develop their ideas as well as a range of manufacturing techniques. We strive to overcome barriers that students may have faced in the past by teaching them problem solving skills and different approaches to tasks which will help with any future Technology qualifications they wish to gain. One of the biggest barriers that some students face is a fear of failure when designing and at St Matthias we give students a safe space in which to fully explore their ideas. A significant number of our students arrive at St Matthias with limited or no prior KS2 experience in Design and Technology and no experience of the technical equipment therefore there is a specific focus on health and safety throughout Design and Technology lessons.</p>
<p>Art &amp; Design</p> <p><i>Exam board:</i> AQA</p>	<p>At St Matthias the KS3 and short stay KS4 art curriculum for the academic year has been designed on a topic basis each term.</p> <p>The topics at KS3 are as follows:</p> <p>Term 1- Colour, marks and pattern</p> <p>Term 2- Bristol &amp; Bath</p> <p>Term 3- Ceremonies, festivals and celebrations</p> <p>Term 4- Buildings and structures</p> <p>Term 5- The natural world</p> <p>Term 6- Myself</p> <p>The topic curriculum is designed to develop the key concepts of creativity, competence, cultural understanding and critical understanding as well as developing general knowledge, confidence, independent learning skills, cognitive skills, SMSC and personal, learning and thinking skills and promotion of EDI. Each topic promotes equality, diversity and cultural identity as pupils study art and artists from a range of countries, cultures, sexual orientations, genders and celebrates uniqueness and diversity.</p> <p>The planned tasks throughout the year are sequential and develop and build upon key skills and knowledge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Recording/developing ideas in response to a topic (using a range of methods)</li> <li>● Exploring (a wide range of 2D and 3D media, techniques and processes)</li> <li>● Making/creating/practical skills</li> <li>● Art literacy (to analyse and evaluate their own work, and that of others)</li> </ul>

	<p>The focus for Key Stage 4 pupils is the development of skills and knowledge in order to produce a portfolio of work for AQA GCSE Art and Design. Pupils are given a topic on which they build a portfolio of work that evidences work for each of the following GCSE assessment objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● AO1: Develop ideas through investigations, demonstrating critical understanding of sources.</li><li>● AO2: Refine work by exploring ideas, selecting and experimenting with appropriate media, materials, techniques and processes.</li><li>● AO3: Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions as work progresses.</li><li>● AO4: Present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and demonstrates understanding of visual language.</li></ul>
Careers	<p>Careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) is an essential part of the support we offer to students at St Matthias Academy. Effective careers support is a vital part of the curriculum and helps to prepare young people for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences they will encounter as they prepare for transition from the Academy or their transition to a post-16 destination and beyond.</p> <p>During their time at school, all students can expect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● the support they need to make the right choices for Key Stage 4 and beyond into their post-16 destination</li><li>● access to up-to-date and unbiased information on future learning and training, careers and labour market information</li><li>● support to develop the self-awareness and career management skills needed for their future</li><li>● formal CEIAG sessions covering employability skills, post-16 options, the world of work, the job market and the skills needed for the future</li><li>● a meaningful encounter with a representative from the world of work each school year; this could be through work experience, Careers Week activities, assemblies, careers talks (in or outside lessons), projects and visits</li><li>● to hear from a range of education and training providers, including colleges, universities and apprenticeship organisations (where appropriate); this could include visits and taster days, as well as assemblies, talks and meetings at school</li><li>● to keep parents/carers informed of their progress and provide parents/carers with information to support students' career planning and decision-making</li><li>● access to one-to-one guidance with a trained, impartial careers adviser.</li></ul> <p>Students complete a number of AQA unit awards that run alongside the ASDAN PSHE Short Course depending on their length of time they are with us, which is delivered in weekly careers lessons.</p> <p>Working at their own individual pace, each students completed modules from the following areas:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Employability Skills: self-management, problem-solving, organisation, punctuality and personal presentation.</li> <li>● Career exploration</li> <li>● Career management</li> <li>● Considering higher education</li> <li>● Considering apprenticeships</li> <li>● Preparing for the workplace &amp; College</li> <li>● Transition at post 16</li> </ul> <p>We also pride ourselves in striving to achieve all of the Gatsby Benchmarks, which are used across all sites:</p> <p><a href="#">Gatsby benchmarks</a></p>
PE	<p>The curriculum at St Matthias meets the national curriculum which consists of the following golden threads:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To promote a lifestyle that supports lifelong physical activity.</li> <li>● To build confidence in a wide range of sports and physical activities through application and coaching.</li> <li>● To offer a wide range of extra-curricular activities to enrich and extend our students opportunities and experiences in sport.</li> <li>● To develop leadership and teamwork skills through sport.</li> <li>● To challenge every student to perform at their own 'Personal Best' each lesson.</li> </ul> <p>Our curriculum intends to develop in students a deep appreciation of the importance of physical activity to support a healthy and positive lifestyle. The curriculum gives students an opportunity to participate and develop skills in various different sports including individual sports and team sports. We are aware of different barriers to participation in sports and an appreciation of tactical and technical aspects of sports is instilled in students throughout the curriculum.</p>
<p>ICT</p> <p><i>Exam board:</i> AQA</p>	<p>The curriculum at St Matthias allows students to develop their skills in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) with the opportunity to work towards AQA Digital Skills qualifications. The curriculum is designed to give learners the skills to operate confidently, effectively and independently in education, work and everyday life.</p> <p>The aims of the curriculum are to develop learner understanding and skills in the following key areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Using ICT</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Finding and selecting information</li><li>● Developing, presenting and communicating information.</li></ul> <p>Our vision is for every student to leave St Matthias equipped with the computing and technological tools necessary for daily life. We strive to increase our students' confidence and aspirations, assisting them in overcoming any preconceptions or difficulties with ICT, and securing skills that will allow them to flourish in the wider world.</p>
Personal Development	<p>Personal Development activities are available to all pupils and provide opportunities for pupils to make progress against profoundly personalised targets.</p> <p>Personal development targets are derived through a Strengths and Needs Analysis which encapsulates the views of all stakeholders. Activities offer opportunities for holistic growth for pupils, through weekly sessions where they can make progress towards their personal development targets in addition to opportunities within the academic curriculum.</p> <p>Progress against personal development targets is reviewed, monitored and moderated throughout the school year. We record and evidence progress using the app 'Evidence for Learning'. Evidence is collected in the form of photographs, videos and staff comments.</p> <p>Many of our PD activities also allow students to gain additional awards and qualifications. Awards support the development of confidence and self-esteem through learner inspired, hands-on experiences in a different settings. There is also a strong emphasis on encouraging pupils to expand their leisure activities and take part in community based groups and clubs.</p> <p>Below is a list of some enrichment opportunities offered that can lead to AQA awards. These change throughout the year to add variety and to make best use of local facilities. Examples of recently run Enrichment Activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● BMX</li><li>● Art Wellbeing</li><li>● Resin Art</li><li>● Criminal Law</li><li>● Bouldering</li><li>● Boxing</li><li>● Crafts</li><li>● Music</li><li>● Hair &amp; Beauty</li></ul>